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THE
WORKS
OF THE
ENGLISH POETS.

WITH
P R E F A C E S,
BIOGRAPHICAL AND CRITICAL,
BY SAMUEL JOHNSON.

VOLUME THE FIFTIETH.

L O N D O N :

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THE
FIFTIETH VOLUME
OF THE
ENGLISH POETS;
CONTAINING
HOMER'S ODYSSEY.
BOOK I.—XII.

VOL. L.

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A
GENERAL VIEW
OF
THE EPICK POEM,
AND OF
THE ILIAD AND ODYSSEY:

EXTRACTED FROM BOSSU.

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S E C T. I.

OF THE NATURE OF EPIC POETRY.

THE fables of poets were originally employed in representing the Divine Nature, according to the notion then conceived of it. This sublime subject occasioned the first poets to be called Divines, and Poetry the Language of the Gods. They divided the Divine Attributes into so many persons; because the infirmity of a human mind cannot sufficiently conceive, or explain, so much power and action in a simplicity so great and indivisible as that of God. And, perhaps, they were also jealous of the advantages they reaped from such excellent and exalted learning, and of which they thought the vulgar part of mankind was not worthy.

They could not describe the operations of this Almighty Cause, without speaking at the same time of its effects: so that to Divinity, they added Physiology; and treated of both, without quitting the umbrages of their allegorical expressions.

But man being the chief and the most noble of all that God produced, and nothing being so proper, or more useful to poets than this subject; they added it to the former, and treated of the doctrine of morality

4 VIEW OF THE EPICK POEM, AND

after the same manner as they did that of divinity and philosophy; and from morality thus treated, is formed that kind of poem and fable which we call Epick.

The poets did the same in morality, that the divines had done in divinity. But that infinite variety of the actions and operations of the Divine Nature (to which our understanding bears so small a proportion) did, as it were, force them upon dividing the single idea of the Only One God into several persons, under the different names of Jupiter, Juno, Neptune, and the rest.

And on the other hand, the nature of moral philosophy being such, as never to treat of things in particular, but in general; the epicks poets were obliged to unite in one single idea, in one and the same person, and in an action which appeared singular, all that looked like it in different persons and in various actions; which might be thus contained as so many species under their genus.

The presence of the Deity, and the care such an august cause is to be supposed to take about any action, obliges the poet to represent this action as great, important, and managed by kings and princes. It obliges him likewise to think and speak in an elevated way above the vulgar, and in a style that may in some sort keep up the character of the divine persons he introduces. To this end serve the poetical and figurative expression, and the majesty of the heroick verse.

But all this, being divine and surprizing, may quite ruin all probability; therefore the poet should take a particular

particular care as to that point, since his chief aim is to instruct, and without probability any action is less likely to persuade.

Lastly, since precepts ought to be concise, to be the more easily conceived, and less oppress the memory; and since nothing can be more effectual to this end than proposing one single idea, and collecting all things so well together, as to be present to our minds all at once; therefore the poets have reduced all to one single action, under one and the same design, and in a body whose members and parts should be homogeneous.

What we have observed of the nature of the Epick Poem, gives us a just idea of it, and we may define it thus:

“ The Epick Poem is a discourse invented by art,
 “ to form the manners, by such instructions as are
 “ disguised under the allegories of some one important
 “ action, which is related in verse, after a probable,
 “ diverting, and surprizing manner.”

S E C T. II.

THE FABLE OF THE ILIAD.

IN every design which a man deliberately undertakes, the end he proposes is the first thing in his mind, and that by which he governs the whole work, and all its parts: thus, since the end of the Epick Poem is to regulate the manners, it is with this first view the poet ought to begin.

6 VIEW OF THE EPICK POEM, AND

But there is a great difference between the philosophical and the poetical doctrine of Manners. The schoolmen content themselves with treating of virtues and vices in general; the instructions they give are proper for all states of people, and for all ages. But the poet has a nearer regard to his own country, and the necessities of his own nation. With this design he makes choice of some piece of morality, the most proper and just he can imagine; and in order to press this home, he makes less use of the force of reasoning, than of the power of insinuation; accommodating himself to the particular customs and inclinations of those who are to be the subject, or the readers, of his work.

Let us now see how Homer has acquitted himself in these respects.

He saw the Grecians, for whom he designed his Poem, were divided into as many states as they had capital cities. Each was a body politic apart, and had its form of government independent from all the rest. And yet these distinct states were very often obliged to unite together in one body against their common enemies. These were two very different sorts of government, such as could not be comprehended in one maxim of morality, and in one single poem.

The poet, therefore, has made two distinct fables of them. The one is for Greece in general, united into one body, but composed of parts independent on each other; and the other for each particular state, considered

OF THE ILIAD AND ODYSSEY.

7

considered as they were in time of peace, without the former circumstances and the necessity of being united.

As for the first sort of government, in the union, or rather in the confederacy of many independent states; experience has always made it appear, "That nothing
" so much causes success as a due subordination, and
" a right understanding among the chief commanders.
" And on the other hand, the inevitable ruin of such
" confederacies proceeds from the heats, jealousies,
" and ambition of the different leaders, and the dis-
" contents of submitting to a single general." All sorts of states, and in particular the Grecians, had dearly experienced this truth. So that the most useful and necessary instruction that could be given them, was, to lay before their eyes the loss which both the people and the princes must of necessity suffer, by the ambition, discord, and obstinacy of the latter.

Homer then has taken for the foundation of his fable this great truth; That a misunderstanding between princes is the ruin of their own states. "I sing (says he) the anger of Achilles, so pernicious to the
" Grecians, and the cause of so many heroes deaths,
" occasioned by the discord and separation of Aga-
" memnon and that prince."

But that this truth may be completely and fully known, there is need of a second to support it. It is necessary in such a design, not only to represent the confederate states at first disagreeing among themselves,

8 **VIEW OF THE EPICK POEM, AND**

and from thence unfortunate; but to show the same states afterwards reconciled and united, and of consequence victorious.

Let us now see how he has joined all these in one general action.

“ Several princes independent on one another were
“ united against a common enemy. The person whom
“ they had elected their general, offers an affront to
“ the most valiant of all the confederates. This
“ offended prince is so far provoked, as to relinquish
“ the union, and obstinately refuse to fight for the
“ common cause. This misunderstanding gives the
“ enemy such an advantage, that the allies are very
“ near quitting their design with dishonour. He him-
“ self who made the separation, is not exempt from
“ sharing the misfortune which he brought upon his
“ party. For having permitted his intimate friend to
“ succour them in a great necessity, this friend is kil-
“ led by the enemy’s general. Thus the contending
“ princes, being both made wiser at their own cost, are
“ reconciled, and unite again: then this valiant prince
“ not only obtains the victory in the public cause, but
“ revenges his private wrongs, by killing with his own
“ hands the author of the death of his friend.”

This is the first platform of the Poem, and the fiction which reduces into one important and universal action all the particulars upon which it turns.

In the next place it must be rendered probable by the circumstances of times, places, and persons: some persons must be found out, already known by history or otherwise,

otherwise, whom we may with probability make the actors and personages of this fable. Homer has made choice of the siege of Troy, and feigned that this action happened there. To a phantom of his brain, whom he would paint valiant and cholerick, he has given the name of Achilles; that of Agamemnon to his general; that of Hector to the enemy's commander, and so to the rest.

Besides, he was obliged to accommodate himself to the manners, customs, and genius of the Greeks his auditors, the better to make them attend to the instruction of his Poem: and to gain their approbation by praising them; so that they might the better forgive him the representation of their own faults in some of his chief personages. He admirably discharges all these duties, by making these brave princes and those victorious people all Grecians, and the fathers of those he had a mind to commend.

But not being content, in a work of such a length, to propose only the principal point of the moral, and to fill up the rest with useless ornaments and foreign incidents, he extends this moral by all its necessary consequences. As for instance, in the subject before us, it is not enough to know that a good understanding ought always to be maintained among confederates: it is likewise of equal importance that, if there happens any division, care must be taken to keep it secret from the enemy, that their ignorance of this advantage may prevent their making use of it. And in the second place, when their concord is but counterfeit and only in appearance,

fo VIEW OF THE EPICK POEM, AND

pearance, one should never press the enemy too closely; for this would discover the weakness which we ought to conceal from them.

The episode of Patroclus most admirable furnishes us with these two instructions. For when he appeared in the arms of Achilles, the Trojans, who took him for that prince now reconciled and united to the confederates, immediately gave ground, and quitted the advantages they had before over the Greeks. But Patroclus, who should have been contented with this success, presses upon Hector too boldly, and, by obliging him to fight, soon discovers that it was not the true Achilles who was clad in his armour, but a hero of much inferior prowess. So that Hector kills him, and regains those advantages which the Trojans had lost, on the opinion that Achilles was reconciled.

S E C T. III.

THE FABLE OF THE ODYSSEY.

THE Odyssey was not designed, like the Iliad, for the instruction of all the states of Greece joined in one body, but for each state in particular. As a state is composed of two parts; the head which commands, and the members which obey; there are instructions requisite to both, to teach the one to govern, and the others to submit to government.

There are two virtues necessary to one in authority; prudence to order, and care to see his orders put in execution.

cution. The prudence of a politician is not acquired but by a long experience in all sorts of business, and by an acquaintance with all the different forms of governments and states. The care of the administration suffers not him that has the government to rely upon others, but requires his own presence: and kings, who are absent from their states, are in danger of losing them, and give occasion to great disorders and confusion.

These two points may be easily united in one and the same man. "A king forsakes his kingdom to visit the courts of several princes, where he learns the manners and customs of different nations. From hence there naturally arises a vast number of incidents, of dangers, and of adventures, very useful for a political institution. On the other side, this absence gives way to the disorders which happen in his own kingdom, and which end not till his return, whose presence only can re-establish all things." Thus the absence of a king has the same effects in this fable, as the division of the princes had in the former.

The subjects have scarce any need but of one general maxim, which is, to suffer themselves to be governed, and to obey faithfully; whatever reason they may imagine against the orders they receive. It is easy to join this instruction with the other, by bestowing on this wise and industrious prince such subjects, as in his absence would rather follow their own judgment than his commands; and by demonstrating the misfortunes which this disobedience draws upon them, the evil consequences which almost infallibly attend these particular

particular notions, which are entirely different from the general idea of him who ought to govern.

But as it was necessary that the princes in the *Iliad* should be choleric and quarrelsome, so it is necessary in the fable of the *Odyssey* that the chief person should be sage and prudent. This raises a difficulty in the fiction; because this person ought to be absent for the two reasons above mentioned, which are essential to the fable, and which constitute the principal aim of it: but he cannot absent himself, without offending against another maxim of equal importance; viz. That a king should upon no accounts leave his country.

It is true, there are sometimes such necessities as sufficiently excuse the prudence of a politician in this point. But such a necessity is a thing important enough of itself to supply matter for another poem, and this multiplication of the action would be vicious. To prevent which, in the first place, this necessity, and the departure of the hero, must be disjoined from the poem; and in the second place, the hero having been obliged to absent himself, for a reason antecedent to the action, and placed distinct from the fable, he ought not so far to embrace this opportunity of instructing himself, as to absent himself voluntarily from his own government. For at this rate, his absence would be merely voluntary, and one might with reason lay to his charge all the disorders which might arise.

Thus in the constitution of the fable he ought not to take for his action, and for the foundation of his poem, the departure of a prince from his own country

nor

nor his voluntary stay in any other place; but his return, and this return retarded against his will. This is the first idea Homer gives us of it *. His hero appears at first in a desolate island, sitting upon the side of the sea, which, with tears in his eyes, he looks upon as the obstacle which had so long opposed his return, and detained him from revisiting his own dear country.

And lastly, since this forced delay might more naturally and usually happen to such as make voyages by sea; Homer has judiciously made choice of a prince, whose kingdom was in an island.

Let us see then how he has feigned all this action, making his hero a person in years, because years are requisite to instruct a man in prudence and policy.

“ A prince had been obliged to forsake his native
“ country, and to head an army of his subjects in a
“ foreign expedition. Having gloriously performed
“ this enterprize, he was marching home again, and
“ conducting his subjects to his own state. But spite
“ of all the attempts, with which the eagerness to re-
“ turn had inspired him, he was stopt by the way by
“ tempests for several years, and cast upon several
“ countries, differing from each other in manners and
“ government. In these dangers, his companions,
“ not always following his orders, perished through
“ their own fault. The grandees of his country
“ strangely abuse his absence, and raise no small dis-
“ orders at home. They consume his estate, conspire

* Odyssey V.

“ to destroy his son, would constrain his queen to ac-
 “ cept of one of them for her husband ; and indulge
 “ themselves in all violence, so much the more, be-
 “ cause they were persuaded he would never return.
 “ But at last he returns, and discovering himself only
 “ to his son and some others, who had continued firm
 “ to him, he is an eye-witness of the insolence of his
 “ enemies, punishes them according to their deserts,
 “ and restores to his island that tranquillity and re-
 “ pose to which they had been strangers during his
 “ absence.”

As the truth, which serves for foundation to this
 fiction, is, that the absence of a person from his own
 home, or his neglect of his own affairs, is the cause
 of great disorders : so the principal point of the action,
 and the most essential one, is the absence of the hero.
 This fills almost all the poem : for not only this real
 absence lasted several years, but even when the hero
 returned, he does not discover himself; and this pru-
 dent disguise, from whence he reaped so much advan-
 tage, has the same effect upon the authors of the dis-
 orders, and all others who knew him not, as his real
 absence had before, so that he is absent as to them, till
 the very moment of their punishment.

After the poet had thus composed his fable, and
 joined the fiction to the truth, he then makes choice of
 Ulysses, the king of the isle of Ithaca, to maintain
 the character of his chief personage, and bestowed the
 rest upon Telemachus, Penelope, Antinous, and others,
 whom he calls by what names he pleases.

I shall not here insist upon the many excellent advices, which are so many parts and natural consequences of the fundamental truth; and which the poet very dexterously lays down in those fictions which are the episodes and members of the entire action. Such for instance are these advices: not to intrude one's self into the mysteries of government, which the prince keeps secret; this is represented to us by the winds shut up in a bull-hide, which the miserable companions of Ulysses would needs be so foolish as to pry into: not to suffer one's self to be led away by the seeming charms of an idle and inactive life, to which the Syrens song invited*: not to suffer one's self to be sensualized by pleasures, like those who were changed into brutes, by Circe: and a great many other points of morality necessary for all sorts of people.

This poem is more useful to the people than the Iliad, where the subjects suffer rather by the ill conduct of their princes, than through their own miscarriages. But in the Odyssey, it is not the fault of Ulysses that is the ruin of his subjects, This wise prince leaves untried no method to make them partakers of the benefit of his return. Thus the poet in the Iliad says, "He sings the anger of Achilles, which had caused the death of so many Grecians;" and, on the contrary, in the Odyssey he tells his readers, "That the subjects perished through their own fault."

* "Improba Syren desidia." HORA.

S E C T.

S E C T. IV.

OF THE UNITY OF THE FABLE.

ARISTOTLE bestows great encomiums upon Homer for the simplicity of his design, because he has included in one single part all that happened at the siege of Troy. And to this he opposes the ignorance of some poets, who imagined that the unity of the fable or action was sufficiently preserved by the unity of the hero; and who composed their Thebais, Heraclids, and the like, wherein they only heaped up in one poem ever thing that happened to one personage.

He finds fault with those poets who were for reducing the unity of the fable into the unity of the hero, because one man may have performed several adventures, which it is impossible to reduce under any one general and simple head. This reducing of all things to unity and simplicity, is what Horace likewise makes his first rule.

“*Denique sit quodvis simplex duntaxat, & unum,*”

According to these rules, it will be allowable to make use of several fables; or (to speak more correctly) of several incidents, which may be divided into several fables, provided they are so ordered, that the unity of the fable be not spoiled. This liberty is still greater in the Epick Poem, because it is of a larger extent, and ought to be entire and complete.

I will

I will explain myself more distinctly by the practice of Homer.

No doubt but one might make four distinct fables out of these four following instructions.

I. Division between those of the same party exposes them entirely to their enemies.

II. Conceal your weakness; and you will be dreaded as much, as if you had none of those imperfections, of which they are ignorant.

III. When your strength is only feigned, and founded only in the opinion of others; never venture so far as if your strength was real.

IV. The more you agree together, the less hurt can your enemies do you.

It is plain, I say, that each of these particular maxims might serve for the ground-work of a fiction, and one might make four distinct fables out of them. May not one then put all these into one single Epopea? Not unless one single fable can be made out of all. The poet indeed may have so much skill as to unite all into one body, as members and parts, each of which taken asunder would be imperfect: and if he joins them so, as that this conjunction shall be no hindrance at all to the unity and regular simplicity of the fable. This is what Homer has done with such success in the composition of the Iliad.

1. The division between Achilles and his allies tended to the ruin of their designs. 2. Patroclus

comes to their relief in the armour of this hero, and Hector retreats, 3. But this young man pushing the advantage which his disguise gave him, too far, ventures to engage with Hector himself; but not being master of Achilles' strength (whom he only represented in outward appearance) he is killed, and by this means leaves the Grecian affairs in the same disorder, from which, in that disguise, he came to free them. 4. Achilles provoked at the death of his friend, is reconciled, and revenges his loss by the death of Hector. These various incidents being thus united, do not make different actions and fables, but are only the uncomplete and unfinished parts of one and the same action and fable, which alone, when taken thus complexly, can be said to be complete and entire: and all these maxims of the moral, are easily reduced into these two parts, which, in my opinion, cannot be separated without enervating the force of both. The two parts are these, That a right understanding is the preservation, and discord the destruction of states.

Though then the poet has made use of two parts in his poems, each of which might have served for a fable, as we have observed: yet this multiplication cannot be called a vicious and irregular Polymythia, contrary to the necessary unity and simplicity of the fable; but it gives the fable another qualification, altogether necessary and regular, namely, its perfection, and finishing stroke.

S E C T. V.

OF THE ACTION OF THE EPICK POEM.

THE action of a poem is the subject which the poet undertakes, proposes, and builds upon. So that the moral and the instructions which are the end of the Epick Poem are not the matter of it. Those the poets leave in their allegorical and figurative obscurity. They only give notice at the exordium, that they sing some action: The Revenge of Achilles, the Return of Ulysses, &c.

Since then the action is the matter of a fable, it is evident, that whatever incidents are essential to the fable, or constitute a part of it, are necessary also to the action, and are parts of the epick matter, none of which ought to be omitted. Such, for instance, are the contention of Agamemnon and Achilles, the slaughter Hector makes in the Grecian army, the re-union of the Greek princes; and lastly, the re-settlement and victory which was the consequence of that re-union.

There are four qualifications in the epick action: the first is its unity, the second its integrity, the third its importance, the fourth its duration.

The unity of the epick action, as well as the unity of the fable, does not consist either in the unity of the hero, or in the unity of time: three things, I suppose, are necessary to it. The first is, to make use of no episode, but what arises from the very platform and

foundation of the action, and is as it were a natural member of the body. The second is, exactly to unite these episodes and these members with one another. And the third is, never to finish any episode so as it may seem to be an entire action; but to let each episode still appear in its own particular nature, as the member of a body, and as a part of itself not complete.

OF THE BEGINNING, MIDDLE, AND END OF THE ACTION.

ARISTOTLE not only says, that the epick action should be one, but adds, that it should be entire, perfect, and complete; and for this purpose, ought to have a beginning, a middle, and an end. These three parts of a whole are too generally and universally denoted by the words, beginning, middle, and end; we may interpret them more precisely, and say, That the causes and designs of an action, are the beginning: that the effects of these causes, and the difficulties that are met with in the execution of these designs, are the middle; and that the unraveling and resolution of these difficulties are the end.

THE ACTION OF THE ILIAD.

HOMER'S design in the Iliad, is to relate the anger and revenge of Achilles. The beginning of this action is the change of Achilles from a calm to a passionate temper. The middle is the effects of his passion, and

and all the illustrious deaths it is the cause of. The end of this same action in the return of Achilles to his calmness of temper again. All was quiet in the Grecian camp, when Agamemnon, their general, provokes Apollo against them, whom he was willing to appease afterwards at the cost and prejudice of Achilles, who had no part in his fault. This then is an exact beginning: it supposes nothing before, and requires after it the effects of this anger. Achilles revenges himself, and that is an exact middle; it supposes before it the anger of Achilles, this revenge is the effect of it. Then this middle requires after it the effects of this revenge, which is the satisfaction of Achilles: for the revenge had not been complete, unless Achilles had been satisfied. By this means the poet makes his hero, after he was glutted by the mischief he had done to Agamemnon, by the death of Hector, and the honour he did his friend, by insulting over his murderer; he makes him, I say, to be moved by the tears and misfortunes of king Priam. We see him as calm at the end of the poem, during the funeral of Hector, as he was at the beginning of the poem, whilst the plague raged among the Grecians. This end is just; since the calmness of temper Achilles re-enjoyed, is only an effect of the revenge which ought to have preceded: and after this nobody expects any more of his anger. Thus has Homer been very exact in the beginning, middle, and end of the action. he made choice of for the subject of his Iliad,

THE ACTION OF THE ODYSSEY.

HIS design in the *Odyſſey* was to deſcribe the return of Ulyſſes from the ſiege of Troy, and his arrival at Ithaca. He opens this poem with the complaints of Minerva againſt Neptune, who oppoſed the return of this hero, and againſt Calypſo, who detained him in an iſland from Ithaca. Is this a beginning? No; doubtleſs, the reader would know why Neptune is diſpleaſed with Ulyſſes, and how this prince came to be with Calypſo? He would know how he came from Troy thither? The poet answers his demands out of the mouth of Ulyſſes himſelf, who relates theſe things, and begins the action by the recital of his travels from the city of Troy. It ſignifies little whether the beginning of the action be the beginning of the poem. The beginning of this action is that which happens to Ulyſſes, when, upon his leaving Troy, he bends his courſe for Ithaca. The middle comprehends all the miſfortunes he endured, and all the diſorders of his own government. The end is the re-inſtating of this hero in the peaceable poſſeſſion of his kingdom, where he was acknowledged by his ſon, his wife, his father, and ſeveral others. The poet was ſenſible he ſhould have ended ill, had he gone no farther than the death of theſe princes, who were the rivals and enemies of Ulyſſes, becauſe the reader might have looked for ſome revenge, which the ſubjects of theſe princes might have taken on him who had killed their ſovereigns:
but

but this danger over, and the people vanquished and quieted, there was nothing more to be expected. The poem and the action have all their parts, and no more.

But the order of the *Odyſſey* differs from that of the *Iliad*, in that the poem does not begin with the beginning of the action.

OF THE CAUSES AND BEGINNING OF THE ACTION.

THE causes of the action are also what the poet is obliged to give an account of. There are three sorts of causes, the humours, the interests, and the designs of men; and these different causes of an action are likewise often the causes of one another, every man taking up those interests in which his humour engages him, and forming those designs to which his humour and interest incline him. Of all these the poet ought to inform his readers, and render them conspicuous in his principal personages.

Homer has ingeniously begun his *Odyſſey* with the transactions at Ithaca, during the absence of Ulyſſes. If he had begun with the travels of his hero, he would scarce have spoken of any one else, and a man might have read a great deal of the poem, without conceiving the least idea of Telemachus, Penelope, or her suitors, who had so great a share in the action; but in the beginning he has pitched upon, besides these personages whom he discovers, he represents Ulyſſes

24 VIEW OF THE EPICK POEM, &c.

in his full length, and from the very first opening one feels the interest which the Gods take in the action.

The skill and care of the same poet may be seen likewise in inducing his personages in the First Book of his Iliad, where he discovers the humours, the interests, and the designs of Agamemnon, Achilles, Hector, Ulysses, and several others, and even of the Deities. And in his second he makes a review of the Grecian and Trojan armies; which is full evidence, that all we have here said is very necessary.

OF THE MIDDLE OR INTRIGUE OF THE ACTION.

AS these causes are the beginning of the action, the opposite designs against that of the hero are the middle of it, and form that difficulty or intrigue, which makes up the greatest part of the poem; the solution or unraveling commences when the reader begins to see that difficulty removed, and the doubts cleared up. Homer has divided each of his poems into two parts; and has put a particular intrigue, and the solution of it, into each part.

The first part of the Iliad is the anger of Achilles, who is for revenging himself upon Agamemnon by the means of Hector and the Trojans. The intrigue comprehends the three days fight which happened in the absence of Achilles: and it consists on one side in the resistance of Agamemnon and the Grecians; and on the other in the revengeful and inexorable humour of Achilles, which would not suffer him to be reconciled.

The

The loss of the Grecians, and the despair of Agamemnon, prepare for a solution by the satisfaction which the incensed hero received from it. The death of Patroclus joined to the offers of Agamemnon, which of itself had proved ineffectual, remove this difficulty, and make the unraveling of the first part.

This death is likewise the beginning of the second part; since it puts Achilles upon the design of revenging himself on Hector. But the design of Hector is opposite to that of Achilles: this Trojan is valiant, and resolved to stand on his own defence. This valour and resolution of Hector are on his part the cause of the intrigue. All the endeavours Achilles used to meet with Hector, and be the death of him; and the contrary endeavours of the Trojan to keep out of his reach and defend himself, are the intrigue; which comprehends the battle of the last day. The unraveling begins at the death of Hector; and besides that, it contains the insulting of Achilles over his body, the honours he paid to Patroclus, and the intreaties of Priam. The regrets of this king and the other Trojans, in the sorrowful obsequies they paid to Hector's body, and the unraveling; they justify the satisfaction of Achilles, and demonstrate his tranquillity.

The first part of the Odysey is the return of Ulysses to Ithaca. Neptune opposes it by raising tempests, and this makes the intrigue. The unraveling is the arrival of Ulysses upon his own island, where Neptune could offer him no farther injury. The second part is the re-instating this hero in his own government. The

princes,

princes, that are his rivals, oppose him, and this is a fresh intrigue: the solution of it begins at their deaths, and is compleated as soon as the Ithacans were appeased.

These two parts in the *Odyſſey* have not one common intrigue. The anger of Achilles forms both the intrigues in the *Iliad*; and it is ſo far the matter of this *Epoſea*, that the very beginning and end of this poem depend on the beginning and end of this anger. But let the deſire Achilles had to revenge himſelf, and the deſire Ulyſſes had to return to his own country, be never ſo near allied, yet we cannot place them under one and the ſame notion: for that deſire of Ulyſſes is not a paſſion that begins and ends in the poem with the action: it is a natural habit: nor does the poet propoſe it for his ſubject, as he does the anger of Achilles.

We have already obſerved what is meant by the intrigue, and the unraveling thereof; let us now ſay ſomething of the manner of forming both. Theſe two ſhould ariſe naturally out of the very eſſence and ſubject of the poem, and are to be deduced from thence. Their conduct is ſo exact and natural, that it ſeems as if their action had preſented them with whatever they inſerted, without putting themſelves to the trouble of a farther enquiry.

What is more uſual and natural to warriours, than anger, heat, paſſion, and impatience of bearing the leaſt affront or diſreſpect? This is what forms the intrigue of the *Iliad*: and every thing we read there is nothing elſe but the effect of this humour and theſe paſſions.

What

What more natural and usual obstacle to those who take voyages, than the sea, the winds, and the storms? Homer makes this the intrigue of the first part of the *Odyssey*: and for the second, he makes use of almost the infallible effect of the long absence of a master, whose return is quite despaired of, viz. the insolence of his servants and neighbours, the danger of his son and wife, and the sequestration of his estate. Besides, an absence of almost twenty years, and the insupportable fatigues joined to the age of which Ulysses then was, might induce him to believe that he should not be owned by those who thought him dead, and whose interest it was to have him really so. Therefore, if he had presently declared who he was, and had called himself Ulysses, they would easily have destroyed him as an impostor, before he had an opportunity to make himself known,

There could be nothing more natural nor more necessary than this ingenious disguise, to which the advantages his enemies had taken of his absence had reduced him, and to which his long misfortunes had inured him. This allowed him an opportunity, without hazarding any thing, of taking the best measures he could, against those persons who could not so much as mistrust any harm from him. This way was afforded him, by the very nature of his action, to execute his designs, and overcome the obstacles it cast before him. And it is this contest between the prudence and the dissimulation of a single man on one hand, and the ungovernable insolence of so many rivals on

the other, which constitutes the intrigue of the second part of the *Odyſſey*.

OF THE END OR UNRAVELING OF THE ACTION.

IF the plot or intrigue muſt be natural, and ſuch as ſprings from the very ſubject, as has been already urged ; then the winding-up of the plot, by a more ſure claim, muſt have this qualification, and be a probable conſequence of all that went before. As this is what the readers regard more than the reſt, ſo ſhould the poet be more exact in it. This is the end of the poem, and the laſt impreſſion that is to be ſtamped upon them.

We ſhall find this in the *Odyſſey*. Ulyſſes by a tempeſt is caſt upon the iſland of the Phæacians, to whom he diſcovers himſelf, and deſires they would favour his return to his own country, which was not very far diſtant. One cannot ſee any reaſon why the king of this iſland ſhould reſuſe ſuch a reaſonable requeſt, to a hero whom he ſeemed to have in great eſteem. The Phæacians indeed had heard him tell the ſtory of his adventures ; and in this fabulous recital conſiſted all the advantage that he could derive from his preſence ; for the art of war which they admired in him, his undauntedneſs under dangers, his indefatigable patience, and other virtues, were ſuch as theſe iſlanders were not uſed to. All their talent lay in ſinging and dancing, and whatſoever was charming in a quiet life. And here we ſee how dextrouſly Homer prepares the incidents he makes uſe of. Theſe people could do no leſs, for the

account

account with which Ulysses had so much entertained them, than afford him a ship and a safe convoy, which was of little expence or trouble to them.

When he arrived, his long absence, and the travels which had disfigured him, made him altogether unknown; and the danger he would have incurred, had he discovered himself too soon, forced him to a disguise: lastly, This disguise gave him an opportunity of surprising those young suitors, who for several years together had been accustomed to nothing but to sleep well, and fare daintily.

It was from these examples that Aristotle drew this rule, that “ Whatever concludes the poem, should so “ spring from the very constitution of the fable, as “ if it were a necessary, or at least a probable, consequence.”

S E C T. VI.

THE TIME OF THE ACTION.

THE time of the epick action is not fixed, like that of the dramattick poem; it is much longer: for an uninterrupted duration is much more necessary in an action which one sees and is present at, than in one which we only read or hear repeated. Besides, tragedy is fuller of passion, and consequently of such a violence as cannot admit of so long a duration.

The Iliad containing an action of anger and violence, the poet allows it but a short time, about forty days.

The

The design of the *Odyſſey* required another conduct; the character of the hero is prudence and long-suffering; therefore the time of its duration is much longer, above eight years.

THE PASSIONS OF THE EPICK POEM.

THE passions of tragedy are different from those of the epick poem. In the former, terror and pity have the chief place; the passion that seems most peculiar to epick poetry, is admiration.

Besides this admiration, which in general distinguishes the Epick Poem from the Dramatick; each epick poem has likewise some peculiar passion, which distinguishes it in particular from other epick poems, and constitutes a kind of singular and individual difference between these poems of the same species. These singular passions correspond to the character of the hero. Anger and terror reign throughout the *Iliad*, because Achilles is angry, and the most terrible of all men. The *Æneid* has all soft and tender passions, because that is the character of Æneas. The prudence, wisdom, and constancy of Ulysses do not allow him either of these extremes; therefore the poet does not permit one of them to be predominant in the *Odyſſey*. He confines himself to admiration only, which he carries to an higher pitch than in the *Iliad*: and it is upon this account that he introduces a great many more machines, in the *Odyſſey*, into the body of the action, than are to be seen in the actions of the other two poems.

THE

THE MANNERS.

THE manners of the Epick Poem ought to be poetically good, but it is not necessary they be always morally so. They are poetically good, when one may discover the virtue or vice, the good or ill inclinations of every one who speaks or acts: they are poetically bad, when persons are made to speak or act out of character, or inconsistently, or unequally. The manners of *Æneas* and of *Mezentius* are equally good, considered poetically, because they equally demonstrate the piety of the one, and the impiety of the other.

CHARACTER OF THE HERO.

IT is requisite to make the same distinction between a hero in morality, and a hero in poetry, as between moral and poetical goodness. *Achilles* had as much right to the latter, as *Æneas*. *Aristotle* says, That the hero of a poem should be neither good nor bad; neither advanced above the rest of mankind by his virtues, or sunk beneath them by his vices; that he may be the proper and fuller example to others, both what to imitate and what to decline,

The other qualifications of the manners are, that they be suitable to the causes which either raise or discover them in the persons; that they have an exact resemblance to what history, or fable, have delivered of those persons, to whom they are ascribed; and that
there

there be an equality in them, so that no man is made to act, or speak, out of his character.

UNITY OF THE CHARACTER.

BUT this equality is not sufficient for the unity of the character; it is further necessary, that the same spirit appear in all sorts of encounters. Thus *Æneas* acting with great piety and mildness in the first part of the *Æneid*, which requires no other character; and afterwards appearing illustrious in heroic valour, in the wars of the second part; but there, without any appearance either of a hard or a soft disposition; would doubtless, be far from offending against the equality of the manners: but yet there would be no simplicity or unity in the character. So that, besides the qualities that claim their particular place upon different occasions, there must be one appearing throughout, which commands over all the rest; and without this, we may affirm, it is no character.

One may indeed make a hero as valiant as *Achilles*, as pious as *Æneas*, and as prudent as *Ulysses*. But it is a mere chimera, to imagine a hero that has the valour of *Achilles*, the piety of *Æneas*, and the prudence of *Ulysses*, at one and the same time. This vision might happen to an author, who would suit the character of a hero to whatever each part of the action might naturally require, without regarding the essence of the fable, or the unity of the character in the same person upon all sorts of occasions: this hero would be the mildest, best-natured prince in the world, and also
the

the most cholerick, hard-hearted, and implacable creature imaginable; he would be extremely tender like Æneas, extremely violent like Achilles, and yet have the indifference of Ulysses, that is incapable of the two extremes. Would it not be in vain for the poet to call this person by the same name throughout?

Let us reflect on the effects it would produce in several poems, whose authors were of opinion, that the chief character of a hero is that of an accomplished man. They would be all alike; all valiant in battle, prudent in council, pious in the acts of religion, courteous, civil, magnificent; and, lastly, endued with all the prodigious virtues any poet could invent. All this would be independent from the action and the subject of the poem; and upon seeing each hero separated from the rest of the work: we should not easily guess, to what action, and to what poem, the hero belonged. So that we should see, that none of those would have a character; since the character is that, which makes a person discernible, and which distinguishes him from all others.

This commanding quality in Achilles, is his anger; in Ulysses, the art of dissimulation; in Æneas, meekness. Each of these may be stiled, by way of eminence, the character in these heroes.

But these characters cannot be alone. It is absolutely necessary that some other should give them a lustre, and embellish them as far as they are capable: either by hiding the defects that are in each, by some

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34 VIEW OF THE EPICK POEM, AND

noble and shining qualities; as the poet has done the anger of Achilles, by shading it with extraordinary valour: or by making them entirely of the nature of a true and solid virtue, as is to be observed in the two others. The dissimulation of Ulysses is a part of his prudence; and the meekness of Æneas is wholly employed in submitting his will to the Gods. For the making up of this union, our poets have joined together such qualities as are by nature the most compatible; valour with anger, meekness with piety, and prudence with dissimulation. This last union was necessary for the goodness of Ulysses; for, without that, his dissimulation might have degenerated into wickedness and double-dealing.

S E C T. VII. OF THE MACHINERY.

WE now come to the machines of the Epick Poem. The chief passion which it aims to excite being admiration, nothing is so conducive to that as the marvellous; and the importance and dignity of the action is by nothing so greatly elevated as by the care and interposition of Heaven.

These machines are of three sorts. Some are theological, and were invented to explain the nature of the Gods. Others are physical, and represent the things

things of nature, The last are moral, and are images of virtues and vices.

Homer and the ancients have given to their deities the manners, passions, and vices of men. The poems are wholly allegorical; and in this view it is easier to defend Homer than to blame him. We cannot accuse him for making mention of many Gods, for his bestowing passions upon them, or even introducing them fighting against men. The Scripture uses the like figures and expressions.

If it be allowable to speak thus of the Gods in theology, much more in the fictions of natural philosophy; where, if a poet describes the Deities, he must give them such manners, speeches, and actions, as are conformable to the nature of the things they represent under those divinities. The case is the same in the morals of the Deities: Minerva is wise, because she represents prudence; Venus is both good or bad, because the passion of love is capable of these contrary qualities.

Since among the Gods of a poem some are good, some bad, and some indifferently either; and since of our passions we make so many allegorical Deities; we may attribute to the Gods all that is done in the poem, whether good or evil. But these Deities do not act constantly in one and the same manner.

Sometimes they act invisibly, and by mere inspiration; which has nothing in it extraordinary or miraculous; being no more than what we say every day,

36 VIEW OF THE EPICK POEM, AND

“ That some God has assisted us, or some dæmon has
“ instigated us.”

At other times they appear visibly, and manifest themselves to men, in a manner altogether miraculous and præternatural.

The third way has something of both the others; it is in truth a miracle, but is not commonly so accounted: this includes dreams, oracles, &c.

All these ways must be probable; for however necessary the marvellous is to the Epick Action, as nothing is so conducive to admiration; yet we can, on the other hand, admire nothing, that we think impossible. Though the probability of these machines be of a very large extent, (since it is founded upon Divine Power) it is not without limitations. There are numerous instances of allowable and probable machines in the Epick Poem, where the Gods are no less actors than the men. But the less credible sort, such as metamorphoses, &c. are far more rare.

This suggests a reflection on the method of rendering those machines probable, which in their own nature are hardly so. Those, which require only divine probability, should be so disengaged from the action, that one might subtract them from it, without destroying the action. But those, which are essential and necessary, should be grounded upon human probability, and not on the sole power of God. Thus the episodes of Circe, the Syrens, Polyphemus, &c. are necessary to the action of the Odyssey, and yet not humanly probable: yet Homer has artificially reduced them to

human probability, by the simplicity and ignorance of the Phæacians, before whom he causes those recitals to be made.

The next question is, Where, and on what occasions, machines may be used? It is certain Homer and Virgil make use of them every where, and scarce suffer any action to be performed without them. Petronius makes this a precept: "Per ambages, deorumque misteria, &c." The Gods are mentioned in the very proposition of their works, the invocation is address'd to them, and the whole narration is full of them, The Gods are the causes of the action, they form the intrigue, and bring about the solution. The precept of Aristotle and Horace, that the unravelling of the plot should not proceed from a miracle, or the appearance of a God, has place only in Dramatick Poetry, not in the Epick. For it is plain, that both in the solution of the Iliad and Odyssey, the Gods are concerned: in the former, the Deities meet to appease the anger of Achilles: Iris and Mercury are sent to that purpose, and Minerva eminently assists Achilles in the decisive combat with Hector. In the Odyssey, the same Goddess fights close by Ulysses against the suitors, and concludes that peace betwixt him and the Ithacensians, which compleats the poem.

We may therefore determine, that a machine is not an invention to extricate the poet out of any difficulty which embarrasses him: but that the presence of a Divinity, and some action surprizing and extraordinary, are inserted into almost all the parts of the work, in

38 VIEW OF THE EPICK POEM, &c.

order to render it more majestick and more admirable. But this mixture ought to be so made, that the machines might be retrenched, without taking any thing from the action: at the same time that it gives the readers a lesson of piety and virtue; and teaches them, that the most brave and the most wise can do nothing, and attain nothing great and glorious, without the assistance of heaven. Thus the machinery crowns the whole work, and renders it at once marvellous, probable, and moral.

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THE
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A R G U M E N T.

Minerva's Descent to Ithaca.

THE Poem opens within forty-eight days of the arrival of Ulysses in his dominions. He had now remained seven years in the island of Calypso, when the Gods assembled in council proposed the method of his departure from thence, and his return to his native country. For this purpose it is concluded to send Mercury to Calypso, and Pallas immediately descends to Ithaca. She holds a conference with Telemachus, in the shape of Mentès, king of the Taphians; in which she advises him to take a journey in quest of his father Ulysses, to Pylos and Sparta, where Nestor and Menelaus yet reigned: then, after having visibly displayed her divinity, disappears. The suitors of Penelope make great entertainments, and riot in her palace till night. Phe-mius sings to them the return of the Grecians, till Penelope puts a stop to the song. Some words arise between the suitors and Telemachus, who summons the council to meet the day following.

THE
O D Y S S E Y.
B O O K I.

THE man, for wisdom's various arts renown'd,
Long exercis'd in woes, oh Muse! resound.
Who, when his arms had wrought the destin'd fall
Of sacred Troy, and raz'd her heaven-built wall.
Wandering from clime to clime, observant stray'd, 5
Their manners noted, and their states survey'd.

On stormy seas unnumber'd toils he bore,
Safe with his friends to gain his natal shore :
Vain toils! their impious folly dar'd to prey
On herds devoted to the God of day; 10
The God vindictive doom'd them never more
(Ah, men unblest'd!) to touch that natal shore.
Oh, snatch some portion of these acts from Fate,
Celestial Muse! and to our world relate.

Now at their native realms the Greeks arriv'd; 15
All who the war of ten long years surviv'd,
And 'scap'd the perils of the gulphy main.
Ulysses, sole of all the victor train,
An exile from his dear paternal coast,
Deplor'd his absent queen, and empire lost. 20
Calypso in her caves constrain'd his stay,
With sweet, reluctant, amorous delay :
In vain—for now the circling years disclose
The day predestin'd to reward his woes.

At

At length his Ithaca is given by fate,
 Where yet new labours his arrival wait;
 At length their rage the hostile powers restrain,
 All but the ruthless monarch of the main.
 But now the God, remote, a heavenly guest,
 In Æthiopia grac'd the genial feast
 (A race divided, whom with sloping rays
 The rising and descending sun surveys);
 There on the world's extremest verge, rever'd
 With hecatombs and prayer in pomp preferr'd,
 Distant he lay: while in the bright abodes
 Of high Olympus, Jove conven'd the Gods:
 Th' assembly thus the Sire supreme address,
 Ægythus' fate revolving in his breast,
 Whom young Orestes to the dreary coast
 Of Pluto sent, a blood-polluted ghost.

Perverse mankind! whose wills, created free,
 Charge all their woes on absolute decree;
 All to the dooming Gods their guilt translate,
 And follies are miscall'd the crimes of fate.
 When to his lust Ægythus gave the rein,
 Did Fate, or we, th' adulterous act constrain?
 Did Fate, or we, when great Atrides dy'd,
 Urge the bold traitor to the regicide?
 Hermes I sent, while yet his soul remain'd
 Sincere from royal blood, and faith profan'd;
 To warn the wretch, that young Orestes, grown
 To manly years, should re-assert the throne.
 Yet, impotent of mind, and uncontrol'd,
 He plung'd into the gulf which heaven foretold.

Here

Here paus'd the God; and penfive thus replies 55

Minerva, graceful with her azure eyes:

O thou! from whom the whole creation springs,

The source of power on earth deriv'd to kings!

His death was equal to the direful deed;

So may the man of blood be doom'd to bleed! 60

But grief and rage alternate wound my breast,

For brave Ulysses, still by Fate oppress'd.

Amidst an isle, around whose rocky shore

The forests murmur, and the surges roar,

The blameless hero from his wish'd for home 65

A goddess guards in her enchanted dome:

(Atlas her sire, to whose far-piercing eye

The wonders of the deep expanded lie;

Th' eternal columns which on earth he rears

End in the starry vault, and prop the spheres.) 70

By his fair daughter is the chief confin'd,

Who soothes to dear delight his anxious mind:

Successless all her soft caresses prove,

To banish from his breast his country's love;

To see the smoke from his lov'd palace rise, 75 }

While the dear isle in distant prospect lies,

With what contentment would he close his eyes?

And will Omnipotence neglect to save

The suffering virtue of the wise and brave?

Must he, whose altars on the Phrygian shore 80

With frequent rites, and pure, avow'd thy power,

Be doom'd the worst of human ills to prove,

Unblest, abandon'd to the wrath of Jove?

Daughter!

Daughter! what words have pass'd thy lips unweigh'd?
(Reply'd the Thunderer to the martial maid) 85

Deem not unjustly by my doom oppress'd
Of human race the wisest and the best.

Neptune, by prayer repentant rarely won,

Afflicts the chief, t' avenge his giant-son,

Whose visual orb Ulysses robb'd of light! 90

Great Polypheme, of more than mortal might!

Him young Thoösa bore (the bright increase

Of Phorcys, dreaded in the founts and seas):

Whom Neptune ey'd with bloom of beauty blest,

And in his cave the yielding nymph compress'd. 95

For this, the God constrains the Greek to roam,

A hopeless exile from his native home,

From death alone exempt—but cease to mourn!

Let all combine t' atchieve his wish'd return:

Neptune aton'd, his wrath shall now refrain, 100

Or thwart the synod of the Gods in vain.

Father and king ador'd! Minerva cry'd,

Since all who in th' Olympian bower reside

Now make the wandering Greek their public care,

Let Hermes to th' Atlantick * isle repair; 105

Bid him, arriv'd in bright Calypso's court,

The sanction of th' assembled powers report:

That wise Ulysses to his native land

Must speed, obedient to their high command.

Meantime Telemachus, the blooming heir 110

Of sea-girt Ithaca, demands my care:

* Orgyia.

'Tis

'Tis mine to form his green unpractis'd years,
In sage debates; surrounded with his peers,
To save the state; and timely to restrain
The bold intrusion of the suitor-train:

115

Who croud his palace, and with lawless power
His herds and flocks in feastful rites devour.
To distant Sparta, and the spacious waste
Of sandy Pyle, the royal youth shall haste.
There, warm with filial love, the cause enquire
That from his realm retards his god-like fire:
Delivering early to the voice of fame
The promise of a great, immortal name.

120

She said: the sandals of celestial mould,
Fledg'd with ambrosial plumes, and rich with gold,
Surround her feet; with these sublime she sails
Th' aerial space, and mounts the winged gales:
O'er earth and ocean wide prepar'd to soar,
Her dreaded arm a beamy javelin bore,
Ponderous and vast; which, when her fury burns,
Proud tyrants humbles, and whole hosts o'erturns.
From high Olympus prone her flight she bends.
And in the realm of Ithaca descends.

135

Her lineaments divine, the grave disguise
Of Mentès' form conceal'd from human eyes
(Mentes, the monarch of the Taphian land):
A glittering spear wav'd awful in her hand.
There in the portal plac'd, the heaven-born maid
Enormous riot and mis-rule survey'd.

On hides of bœves, before the palace gate,
(Sad spoils of luxury) the suitors fate.

140

With

With rival art, and ardour in their mien,
 At ches they vie, to captivate the queen;
 Divining of their loves. Attending nigh
 A menial train the flowing bowl supply: 145
 Others, apart, the spacious hall prepare,
 And form the costly feast with busy care.
 There young Telemachus, his bloomy face
 Glowing celestial sweet, with god-like grace
 Amid the circle shines: but hope and fear 150
 (Painful vicissitude!) his bosom tear.
 Now, imag'd in his mind, he sees restor'd
 In peace and joy, the people's rightful lord;
 The proud oppressors fly the vengeful sword. }
 While his fond soul these fancied triumphs swell'd;
 The stranger guest, the royal youth beheld:
 Griev'd that a visitant so long should wait
 Unmark'd, unhonour'd, at a monarch's gate;
 Instant he flew with hospitable haste,
 And the new friend with courteous air embrac'd. 160
 Stranger! whoe'er thou art, securely rest,
 Affianc'd in my faith, a friendly guest:
 Approach the dome, the social banquet share,
 And then the purpose of thy soul declare.
 Thus affable and mild, the prince precedes, 165
 And to the dome th' unknown Celestial leads.
 The spear receiving from her hand, he plac'd
 Against a column, fair with sculpture grac'd;
 Where seemly rang'd in peaceful order stood
 Ulysses' arms, now long disus'd to blood. 170
 He led the Goddess to the sovereign seat,
 Her feet supported with a stool of state

(A pur-

(A purple carpet spread the pavement wide);

Then drew his seat, familiar to her side;

Far from the suitor-train, a brutal crowd,

175

With insolence, and wine, elate and loud:

Where the free guest, unnotic'd, might relate,

If haply conscious, of his father's fate.

The golden ewer a maid obsequious brings,

Replenish'd from the cool, translucent springs;

180

With copious water the bright vase supplies

A silver laver, of capacious size:

They wash. The tables in fair order spread,

They heap the glittering canisters with bread:

Viands of various kinds allure the taste,

185

Of choicest sort and flavour, rich repast!

Delicious wines th' attending herald brought;

The gold gave lustre to the purple draught.

Lur'd with the vapour of the fragrant feast,

In rush'd the suitors with voracious haste:

190

Marshal'd in order due, to each a fewer

Presents, to bathe his hands, a radiant ewer.

Luxuriant then they feast. Observant round

Gay stripling youths the brimming goblets crown'd.

The rage of hunger quell'd, they all advance,

195

And form to measur'd airs the mazy dance:

To Phemius was consign'd the chord'd lyre,

Whose hand reluctant touch'd the warbling wire:

Phemius, whose voice divine could sweetest sing

High strains, responsive to the vocal string.

200

Meanwhile, in whispers to his heavenly guest

His indignation thus the prince express:

Indulge

Indulge my rising grief, whilst these (my friend)
 With song and dance the pompous revel end.
 Light is the dance, and doubly sweet the lays, 205
 When for the dear delight another pays,
 His treasur'd stores these cormorants consume,
 Whose bones, defrauded of a regal tomb
 And common turf, lie naked on the plain,
 Or doom'd to welter in the whelming main. 210
 Should he return, that troop so blithe and bold,
 With purple robes inwrought, and stiff with gold,
 Precipitant in fear would wing their flight,
 And curse their cumbrous pride's unweildy weight.
 But, ah, I dream!—th' appointed hour is fled! 215
 And hope, too long with vain delusion fed,
 Deaf to the rumour of fallacious fame,
 Gives to the roll of death his glorious name!
 With venial freedom let me now demand
 Thy name, thy lineage, and paternal land: 220
 Sincere, from whence began thy course, recite,
 And to what ship I owe the friendly freight?
 Now first to me this visit dost thou deign,
 Or number'd in my father's social train?
 All who deserv'd his choice he made his own, 225
 And, curious much to know, he far was known.
 My birth I boast (the blue-ey'd virgin cries)
 From great Anchialus, renown'd and wise:
 Mentest my name; I rule the Taphian race,
 Whose bounds the deep circumfluent waves embrace:
 A duteous people, and industrious isle,
 To naval arts inur'd, and stormy toil.

Freighted

Freightèd with iron from my native land,
 I steer my voyage to the Brutian strand;
 To gain by commerce for the labour'd mass,
 A just proportion of refulgent brass.
 Far from your capital my ship resides
 At Reithrus, and secure at anchor rides;
 Where waving groves on airy Neion grow,
 Supremely tall, and shade the deeps below.
 Thence to revisit your imperial dome,
 An old hereditary guest I come:
 Your father's friend. Laertes can relate
 Our faith unspotted, and its early date;
 Who, prest with heart-corroding grief and years,
 To the gay court a rural shade prefers,
 Where, sole of all his train, a matron sage
 Supports with homely food his drooping age,
 With feeble steps from marshaling his vines
 Returning sad, when toilsome day declines.
 With friendly speed, induc'd by erring fame,
 To hail Ulysses' safe return, I came;
 But still the frown of some celestial Power
 With envious joy retards the blissful hour.
 Let not your soul be sunk in sad despair;
 He lives, he breathes this heavenly vital air,
 Among a savage race, whose shelly bounds
 With ceaseless roar the foaming deep surrounds.
 The thoughts which roll within my ravish'd breast,
 To me, no seer, th' inspiring Gods suggest;
 Nor skill'd, nor studious, with prophetic eye
 To judge the winged omens of the sky.

Yet hear this certain speech, nor deem it vain;
 Though adamantine bonds the chief restrain,
 The dire restraint his wisdom will defeat,
 And soon restore him to his regal seat.

265

But, generous youth! sincere and free declare,
 Are you, of manly growth, his royal heir?
 For sure Ulysses in your look appears,
 The same his features, if the same his years.
 Such was that face, on which I dwelt with joy
 Ere Greece assembled stemm'd the tides to Troy;
 But, parting then for that detested shore,
 Our eyes, unhappy! never greeted more.

270

To prove a genuine birth (the prince replies)
 On female truth assenting faith relies;
 Thus manifest of right, I build my claim
 Sure-founded on a fair maternal fame,
 Ulysses' son: but happier he, whom fate
 Hath plac'd beneath the storms which toss the great!
 Happier the son, whose hoary fire is blest
 With humble affluence, and domestic rest!
 Happier than I, to future empire born,
 But doom'd a father's wretched fate to mourn!

275

To whom, with aspect mild, the guest divine:
 Oh true descendant of a scepter'd line!
 The Gods a glorious fate from anguish free
 To chaste Penelope's increase decree.
 But say, yon joyful troop so gaily drest,
 Is this a bridal or a friendly feast!
 Or from their deed I rightlier may divine,
 Unseemly flown with insolence and wine;

290

Unwelcome

ODYSSEY, Book I.

51

Unwelcome revellers, whose lawless joy
Pains the sage ear, and hurts the sober eye?

Magnificence of old (the prince replied) 295

Beneath our roof with virtue could reside;

Unblam'd abundance crown'd the royal board,

What time this dome rever'd her prudent lord;

Who now (so heaven decrees) is doom'd to mourn,

Bitter constraint! erroneous and forlorn. 300

Better the chief, on Ilion's hostile plain,

Had fall'n furrounded with his warlike train;

Or safe return'd, the race of glory past,

New to his friends' embrace, had breath'd his last!

Then grateful Greece with streaming eyes would raise

Historic marbles, to record his praise;

His praise, eternal on the faithful stone,

Had with transmissive honour grac'd his son.

Now snatch'd by harpies to the dreary coast,

Sunk is the hero, and his glory lost: 310

Vanish'd at once! unheard-of, and unknown!

And I his heir in misery alone.

Nor for a dear, lost father only flow

The filial tears, but woe succeeds to woe:

To tempt the spouseless queen with amorous wiles, 315

Resort the nobles from the neighbouring isles;

From Samos, circled with the Æonian main,

Dulichium, and Zacynthus' sylvan reign:

Ev'n with presumptuous hope her bed t' ascend,

The lords of Ithaca their right pretend. 320

She seems attentive to their pleaded vows,

Her heart detesting what her ear allows.

E 2

They,

They, vain expectants of the bridal hour,
 My stores in riotous expence devour,
 In feast and dance the mirthful months employ, 325
 And meditate my doom, to crown their joy.

With tender pity touch'd, the Goddess cried:
 Soon may kind heaven a sure relief provide!
 Soon may your fire discharge the vengeance due,
 And all your wrongs the proud oppressors rue! 330
 Oh! in that portal should the chief appear,
 Each hand tremendous with a brazen spear,
 In radiant panoply his limbs incas'd
 (For so of old my father's court he grac'd,
 When social mirth unbent his serious soul, 335
 O'er the full banquet, and the sprightly bowl):
 He then from Epyré, the fair domain
 Of Ilus, sprung from Jason's royal strain,
 Measur'd a length of seas, a toilsome length, in vain. }
 For voyaging to learn the direful art 340
 To taint with deadly drugs the barbed dart;
 Observant of the Gods, and sternly just,
 Ilus refus'd t' impart the baneful trust:
 With friendlier zeal my father's soul was fir'd,
 The drugs he knew, and gave the boon desir'd. 345
 Appear'd he now with such heroic port,
 As then conspicuous at the Taphian court;
 Soon should yon boasters cease their haughty strife,
 Or each atone his guilty love with life.
 But of his wish'd return the care resign; 350
 Be future vengeance to the powers divine.
 My sentence hear: with stern distaste avow'd,
 To their own districts drive the suitor-crowd:

ODYSSEY, BOOK I.

53

When next the morning warms the purple east,
 Convoke the peerage, and the Gods attest; 355
 The sorrows of your inmost soul relate;
 And form sure plans to save the sinking state.
 Should second love a pleasing flame inspire,
 And the chaste queen connubial rites require;
 Dismiss'd with honour, let her hence repair 360
 To great Icarius, whose paternal care
 Will guide her passion, and reward the choice
 With wealthy dower, and bridal gifts of price.
 Then let this dictate of my love prevail:
 Instant, to foreign realms prepare to sail, 365
 To learn your father's fortunes: Fame may prove,
 Or omen'd voice, (the messenger of Jove)
 Propitious to the search. Direct your toil
 Through the wide ocean first to sandy Pyle;
 Of Nestor, hoary sage, his doom demand: 370
 Thence speed your voyage to the Spartan strand;
 For young Atrides to th' Achaian coast
 Arriv'd the last of all the victor host.
 If yet Ulysses views the light; forbear,
 Till the fleet hours restore the circling year. 375
 But if his soul hath wing'd the destin'd flight,
 Inhabitant of deep disastrous night:
 Homeward with pious speed repass the main,
 To the pale shade funereal rites ordain,
 Plant the fair column o'er the vacant grave, 380
 A hero's honours let the hero have.
 With decent grief the royal dead deplor'd,
 For the chaste queen select an equal lord.

E 3

Then

When

'Then let revenge your daring mind employ,
 By fraud or force the suitor-train destroy,
 And, starting into manhood, scorn the boy.
 Hast thou not heard how young Orestes, fir'd
 With great revenge, immortal praise acquir'd?
 His virgin-sword, Ægysthus' veins imbrued;
 The murderer fell, and blood aton'd for blood.
 O greatly blest'd with every blooming grace!
 With equal steps the paths of glory trace;
 Join to that royal youth's your rival name,
 And shine eternal in the sphere of Fame.—
 But my associates now my stay deplore,
 Impatient on the hoarse-resounding shore.
 Thou, heedful of advice, secure proceed;
 My praise the precept is, be thine the deed.

390

295

The counsel of my friend (the youth rejoin'd)
 Imprints conviction on my grateful mind.
 So fathers speak (persuasive speech and mild)
 Their sage experience to the favourite child.
 But, since to part, for sweet refection due
 The genials viands let my train renew:
 And the rich pledge of plighted faith receive,
 Worthy the heir of Ithaca to give.

400

405

Defer the promis'd boon, (the Goddess cries,
 Celestial azure brightening in her eyes)
 And let me now regain the Reithrian port:
 From Temesé return'd, your royal court
 I shall revisit; and that pledge receive;
 And gifts, memorial of our friendship, leave.

410

Abrupt, with eagle-speed she cut the sky;
 Instant invisible to mortal eye.

Then

ODYSSEY, Book I.

55

Then first he recogniz'd th' ætherial guest; 415

Wonder and joy alternate fire his breast:

Heroic thoughts, infus'd, his heart dilate;

Revolving much his father's doubtful fate,

At length, compos'd, he join'd the suitor-throng;

Hush'd in attention to the warbled song. 420

His tender theme the charming lyrist chose,

Minerva's anger, and the direful woes

Which voyaging from Troy the victors bore,

While storms vindictive intercept the shore.

The shrilling airs the vaulted roof rebounds, 425

Reflecting to the queen the silver sounds.

With grief renew'd the weeping fair descends;

Their sovereign's step a virgin train attends:

A veil, of richest texture wrought, she wears,

And silent to the joyous hall repairs. 430

There from the portal, with her mild command,

Thus gently checks the minstrel's tuneful hand:

Pemius! let acts of Gods, and heroes old,

What ancient bards in hall and bower have told.

Attemper'd to the lyre, your voice employ; 435

Such the pleas'd ear will drink with silent joy.

But, oh! forbear that dear disastrous name,

To sorrow sacred, and secure of fame:

My bleeding bosom sickens at the sound,

And every piercing note inflicts a wound. 440

Why, dearest object of my duteous love,

(Reply'd the prince) will you the bard reprove?

Oft, Jove's æthereal rays (resistless fire)

The chanter's soul and raptur'd song inspire;

Instinct divine! nor blame severe his choice, 445
 Warbling the Grecian woes with harp and voice:
 For novel lays attract our ravish'd ears;
 But old, the mind with inattention hears;
 Patient permit the sadly pleasing strain;
 Familiar now with grief, your tears refrain, 450
 And in the public woe forget your own;
 You weep not for a perish'd lord, alone.

What Greeks, now wandering in the Stygian gloom,
 With your Ulysses shar'd an equal doom!
 Your widow'd hours, apart, with female toil 455
 And various labours of the loom, beguile;
 There rule, from palace-cares remote and free;
 That care to man belongs, and most to me.

Mature beyond his years the queen admires
 His sage reply, and with her train retires. 460
 Then swelling sorrows burst their former bounds,
 With echoing grief afresh the dome resounds;
 Till Pallas, piteous of her plaintive cries,
 In slumber clos'd her silver-streaming eyes.

Meantime, rekindled at the royal charms, 465
 Tumultuous love each beating bosom warms;
 Intemperate rage a wordy war began;
 But bold Telemachus assum'd the man.
 Instant (he cry'd) your female discord end,
 Ye deedless boasters! and the song attend; 470
 Obey that sweet compulsion, nor profane
 With dissonance the smooth melodious strain.
 Pacific now prolong the jovial feast;
 But when the dawn reveals the rosy east,

ODYSSEY, Book I.

57

475

I, to the peers assembled, shall propose
The firm resolve, I here in few disclose:
No longer live the cankers of my court;
All to your several states with speed resort;
Waste in wild riot what your land allows,
There ply the early feast, and late carouse.

480

But if, to honour lost, 'tis still decreed
For you my bowl shall flow, my flocks shall bleed;
Judge and revenge my right, impartial Jove!—
By him, and all th' immortal thrones above,
(A sacred oath) each proud oppressor, slain,
Shall with inglorious gore this marble stain.

485

Aw'd by the prince, thus haughty, bold, and young,
Rage gnaw'd the lip, and wonder chain'd the tongue.
Silence at length the gay Antinoüs broke,
Constrain'd a smile, and thus ambiguous spoke:
What God to your untutor'd youth affords
This headlong torrent of amazing words?
May Jove delay thy reign, and cumber late
So bright a genius with the toils of state!

490

Those toils (Telemachus serene replies)
Have charms, with all their weight, t' allure the wife.
Fast by the throne obsequious Fame resides,
And wealth incessant rolls her golden tides.
Nor let Antinoüs rage, if strong desire
Of wealth and fame a youthful bosom fire:
Elect by Jove his delegate of sway,
With joyous pride the summons I'd obey.
Whene'er Ulysses roams the realm of night,
Should factious power dispute my lineal right,

495

500

Some

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And wealth incessant rolls her golden tides.
Nor let Antinoüs rage, if strong desire
Of wealth and fame a youthful bosom fire : 500
Elect by Jove his delegate of sway,
With joyous pride the summons I'd obey.
Whene'er Ulysses roams the realm of night,
Should factious power dispute my lineal right,

Some

Some other Greeks a fairer claim may plead;
 To your pretence their title would precede.
 At least, the sceptre lost, I still should reign
 Sole o'er my vassals, and domestic train.

To this Eurymachus: To heaven alone
 Refer the choice to fill the vacant throne:
 Your patrimonial stores in peace possess;
 Undoubted, all your filial claim confess:
 Your private right should impious power invade,
 The peers of Ithaca would arm in aid.

But say, that stranger guest who late withdrew, 515
 What and from whence? his name and lineage shew.

His grave demeanour and majestic grace
 Speak him descended of no vulgar race:
 Did he some loan of ancient right require,
 Or came fore-runner of your scepter'd fire? 520

Oh, son of Polybus! the prince replies,
 No more my fire will glad these longing eyes:
 The queen's fond hope inventive rumour cheers,
 Or vain diviners' dreams divert her fears.
 That stranger-guest the Taphian realm obeys, 525
 A realm defended with incircling seas;
 Mentès, an ever-honour'd name, of old
 High in Ulysses' social list inroll'd.

Thus he, though conscious of th' etherial guest,
 Answer'd evasive of the sly request. 530

Meantime the lyre rejoins the sprightly lay;
 Love-dittied airs, and dance, conclude the day.
 But when the star of eve with golden light
 Adorn'd the matron-brow of sable night;

ODYSSEY, BOOK I.

59

505

The mirthful train dispersing quit the court,
And to their several domes to rest resort.

535

A towering structure to the palace join'd ;
To this his steps the thoughtful prince inclin'd ;
In his pavilion there, to sleep repairs ;

510

The lighted torch, the sage Euryclea bears ;

540

(Daughter of Ops, the just Pisenor's son,

For twenty beeves by great Laertes won ;

In rosy prime with charms attractive grac'd,

Honour'd by him, a gentle lord and chaste,

515

With dear esteem : too wise, with jealous strife

545

To taint the joys of sweet, connubial life.

Sole with Telemachus her service ends,

A child she nurs'd him, and a man attends.)

Whilst to his couch the prince himself addrest,

520

The duteous dame receiv'd the purple vest :

550

The purple vest with decent care dispos'd,

The silver ring she pull'd, the door reclos'd ;

The bolt, obedient to the filken cord,

To the strong staple's inmost depth restor'd,

525

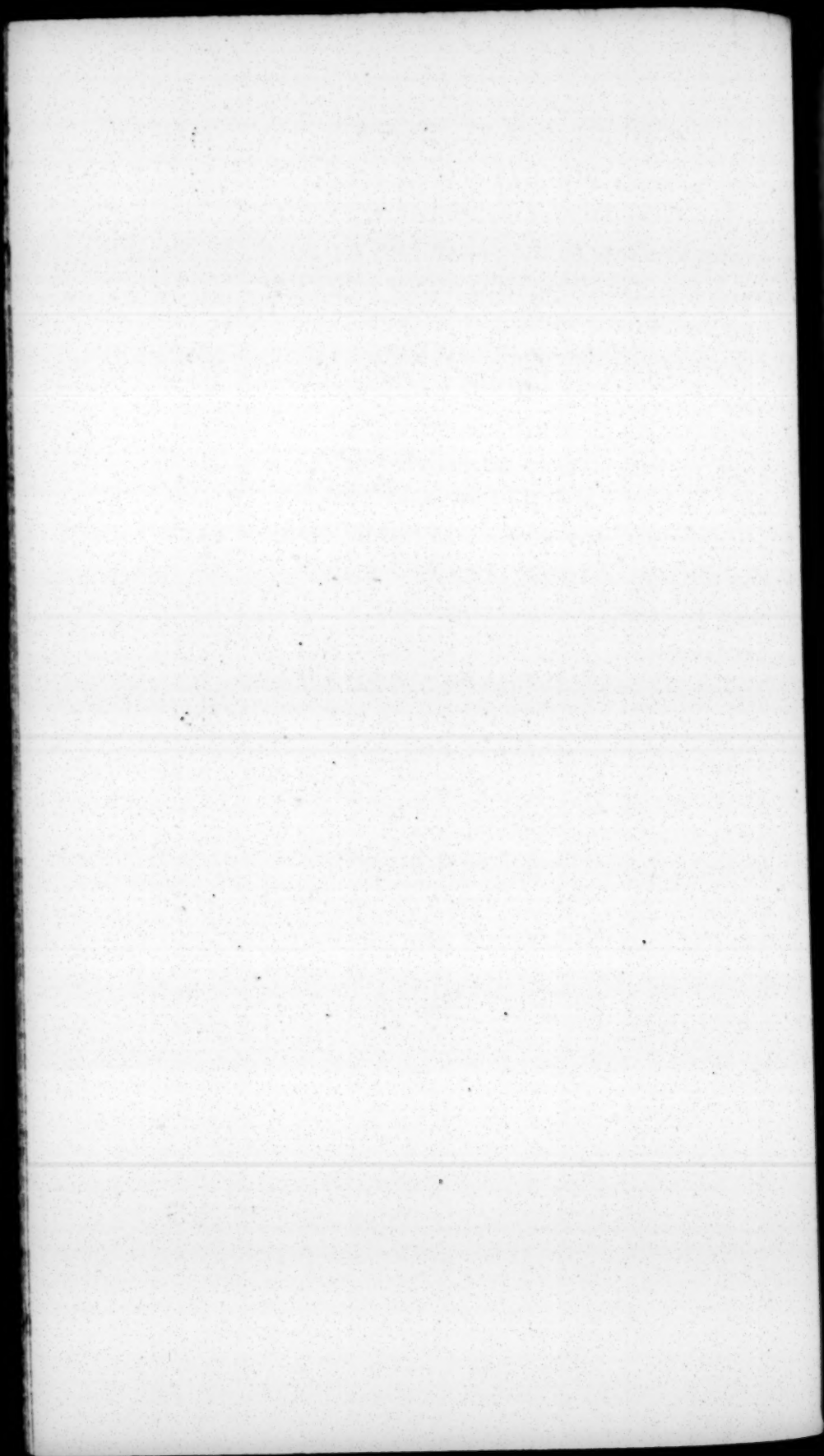
Secur'd the valves. There wrapt in silent shade, 555

Pensive, the rules the Goddess gave, he weigh'd ;

Stretch'd on the downy fleece, no rest he knows,

And in his raptur'd soul the vision glows.

THE



THE
SECOND BOOK
OF THE
ODYSSEY.

A R G U M E N T.

The Council of Ithaca.

TELEMACHUS, in the assembly of the lords of Ithaca, complains of the injustice done him by the suitors, and insists upon their departure from his palace; appealing to the princes, and exciting the people to declare against them. The suitors endeavour to justify their stay, at least till he shall send the queen to the court of Icarius her father; which he refuses. There appears a prodigy of two eagles in the sky, which an Augur expounds to the ruin of the suitors. Telemachus then demands a vessel to carry him to Pylos and Sparta, there to enquire of his father's fortunes. Pallas, in the shape of Mentor (an ancient friend of Ulysses), helps him to a ship, assists him in preparing necessaries for the voyage, and embarks with him that night; which concludes the second day from the opening of the Poem.

The scene continues in the palace of Ulysses in Ithaca.

THE
O D Y S S E Y.
B O O K II.

NOW reddening from the dawn, the morning-ray
Glow'd in the front of heaven, and gave the day.

The youthful hero, with returning light,
Rose anxious from th' inquietudes of night.

A royal robe he wore with graceful pride, 5

A two-edg'd faulchion threaten'd by his side,

Embroider'd sandals glitter'd as he trod,

And forth he mov'd majestic as a God.

Then by his heralds, restless of delay,

To council calls his peers: the peers obey. 10

Soon as in solemn form th' assembly fate,

From his high dome himself descends in state.

Bright in his hand a ponderous javelin shin'd;

Two dogs, a faithful guard, attend behind;

Pallas with grace divine his form improves, 15

And gazing crouds admire him as he moves.

His father's throne he fill'd: while distant stood

The hoary peers, and aged wisdom bow'd.

'Twas silence all. At last Ægyptius spoke;

Ægyptius, by his age and sorrows broke: 20

A length of days his soul with prudence crown'd,

A length of days had bent him to the ground.

His

His eldest * hope in arms to Ilion came,
 By great Ulysses taught the path to fame;
 But (hapless youth) the hideous Cyclops tore
 His quivering limbs, and quaff'd his spouting gore. 25
 Three sons remain'd : to climb with haughty fires
 The royal bed, Eurynomus aspires;
 The rest with duteous love his griefs assuage,
 And ease the fire of half the cares of age. 30
 Yet still his Antiphus he loves, he mourns,
 And, as he stood, he spoke and wept by turns :

Since great Ulysses fought the Phrygian plains,
 Within these walls inglorious silence reigns.
 Say then, ye peers, by whose commands we meet! 35
 Why here once more in solemn council sit?
 Ye young, ye old, the weighty cause disclose:
 Arrives some message of invading foes?
 Or say, does high necessity of state
 Inspire some patriot, and demand debate! 40
 The present synod speaks its author wise;
 Assist him, Jove, thou regent of the skies!

He spoke. Telemachus with transport glows,
 Embrac'd the omen, and majestic rose
 (His royal hand th' imperial sceptre sway'd); 45
 Then thus, addressing to Ægyptius, said:

Reverend old man! lo here confess he stands
 By whom ye meet; my grief your care demands.
 No story I unfold of public woes,
 Nor bear advices of impending foes: 50
 Peace the blest land, and joys incessant crown;
 Of all this happy realm, I grieve alone.

* Antiphus.

For

For my lost fire continual sorrows spring,
The great, the good; your father, and your king.

25 Yet more; our house from its foundation bows, 55

Our foes are powerful, and your sons the foes:

Hither, unwelcome to the queen, they come;

Why seek they not the rich Icarian dome!

If she must wed, from other hands require

30 The dowry: is Telemachus her fire? 60

Yet through my court the noise of revel rings,

And wastes the wise frugality of kings.

Scarce all my herds their luxury suffice;

Scarce all my wine their midnight hours supplies.

35 Safe in my youth, in riot still they grow, 65

Nor in the helpless orphan dread a foe.

But come it will, the time when manhood grants

More powerful advocates than vain complaints.

Approach that hour! insufferable wrong

40 Cries to the Gods, and vengeance sleeps too long. 70

Rise then, ye Peers! with virtuous anger rise!

Your fame revere, but most th' avenging skies.

By all the deathless powers that reign above,

By righteous Themis and by thundering Jove,

45 (Themis, who gives to councils, or denies; 75

Success; and humbles, or confirms the wife)

Rise in my aid! suffice the tears that flow

For my lost fire, nor add new woe to woe.

If e'er he bore the sword to strengthen ill,

50 Or, having power to wrong, betray'd the will, 80

On me, on me your kindled wrath assuage,

And bid the voice of lawless riot rage.

Vol. L.

F

If

For

If ruin to our royal race ye doom,
 Be you the spoilers, and our wealth consume.
 Then might we hope redress from juster laws, 85
 And raise all Ithaca to aid our cause :
 But while your sons commit th' unpunish'd wrong,
 You make the arm of violence too strong.

While thus he spoke, with rage and grief he frown'd,
 And dash'd th' imperial sceptre to the ground. 90
 The big round tear hung trembling in his eye :
 The synod griev'd, and gave a pitying sigh,
 Then silent fate—at length Antinoüs burns :
 With haughty rage, and sternly thus returns :

O insolence of youth ! whose tongue affords 95
 Such railing eloquence, and war of words.
 Studious thy country's worthies to defame,
 Thy erring voice displays thy mother's shame.
 Elusive of the bridal day, she gives
 Fond hope to all, and all with hopes deceives. 100
 Did not the sun, through heaven's wide azure roll'd,
 For three long years the royal fraud behold ?
 While she, laborious in delusion spread
 The spacious loom, and mix'd the various thread :
 Where as to life the wonderous figures rise, 105
 Thus spoke th' inventive queen, with artful sighs :

“ Though cold in death Ulysses breathes no more,
 “ Cease yet a while to urge the bridal hour ;
 “ Cease, till to great Laërtes I bequeath
 “ A task of grief, his ornaments of death ; 110
 “ Lest when the Fates his royal ashes claim,
 “ The Grecian matrons taint my spotless fame ;

“ When

" When he, whom living mighty realms obey'd,
 " Shall want in death a shroud to grace his shade."

Thus she: at once the generous train complies, 115
 Nor fraud mistrusts in Virtue's fair disguise.

The work she ply'd; but, studious of delay,

By night revers'd the labours of the day.

While thrice the sun his annual journey made,

The conscious lamp the midnight fraud survey'd; 120

Unheard, unseen, three years her arts prevail;

The fourth, her maid unfolds th' amazing tale.

We saw, as unperceiv'd we took our stand,

The backward labours of her faithless hand.

Then urg'd, she perfects her illustrious toils; 125

A wonderous monument of female wiles!

But you, oh peers! and thou, oh prince! give ear
 (I speak aloud, that every Greek may hear):

Dismiss the queen: and if her sire approves,

Let him espouse her to the peer she loves: 130

Bid instant to prepare the bridal train,

Nor let a race of princes wait in vain.

Though with a grace divine her soul is blest,

And all Minerva breathes within her breast,

In wonderous arts than woman more renown'd, 135

And more than woman with deep wisdom crown'd;

Though Tyro nor Mycene match her name,

Nor great Alcmena (the proud boasts of Fame)

Yet, thus by heaven adorn'd, by heaven's decree,

She shines with fatal excellence to thee: 140

With thee, the bowl we drain, indulge the feast,

Till righteous heaven reclaim her stubborn breast.

What though from pole to pole resounds her name,
 The son's destruction waits the mother's fame:
 For, till she leaves thy court, it is decreed,
 Thy bowl to empty, and thy flock to bleed. 145

While yet he speaks, Telemachus replies:
 Ev'n nature starts, and what ye ask denies.
 Thus, shall I thus repay a mother's cares,
 Who gave me life, and nurs'd my infant years? 150
 While sad on foreign shores Ulysses treads,
 Or glides a ghost with unapparent shades;
 How to Icarius in the bridal hour
 Shall I, by waste undone, refund the dower?
 How from my father should I vengeance dread? 155
 How would my mother curse my hated head?
 And while in wrath to vengeful fiends she cries,
 How from their hell would vengeful fiends arise?
 Abhorr'd by all, accurs'd my name would grow,
 The earth's disgrace, and human-kind my foe. 160
 If this displease, why urge ye here your stay?
 Haste from the court, ye spoilers, haste away:
 Waste in wild riot what your land allows,
 There ply the early feast, and late carouse.
 But if, to honour lost, 'tis still decreed 165
 For you my bowls shall flow, my flocks shall bleed;
 Judge and assert my right, impartial Jove!
 By him, and all th' immortal host above,
 (A sacred oath) if heaven the power supply,
 Vengeance I vow, and for your wrongs ye die. 170

With that, two eagles from a mountain's height
 By Jove's command direct their rapid flight;

Swift

Swift they descend, with wing to wing conjoin'd,
Stretch their broad plumes, and float upon the wind,
145 Above th' assembled peers they wheel on high, 175
And clang their wings, and hovering beat the sky;
With ardent eyes the rival train they threat,
And, shrieking loud, denounce approaching Fate,
They cuff, they tear; their cheeks and neck they rend,
150 And from their plumes huge drops of blood descend:
Then, sailing o'er the domes and towers, they fly
Full tow'rd the east, and mount into the sky.

The wondering rivals gaze with cares oppress,
And chilling horrors freeze in every breast.
155 Till, big with knowledge of approaching woes, 185
The prince of augurs, Halitherses, rose:
Prescient he view'd th' ærial tracks, and drew
A sure presage from every wing that flew.

Ye sons (he cry'd) of Ithaca, give ear,
160 Hear all! but chiefly you, oh rivals! hear. 190
Destruction sure o'er all your heads impends;
Ulysses comes, and death his steps attends.
Nor to the great alone is death decreed;
We and our guilty Ithaca must bleed.
165 Why cease we then the wrath of heaven to stay? 195
Be humbled all, and lead, ye Great! the way.
For, lo! my words no fancy'd woes relate;
I speak from science, and the voice is fate.

When great Ulysses fought the Phrygian shores
170 To shake with war proud Ilion's lofty towers, 200
Deeds then undone my faithful tongue foretold:
Heaven seal'd my words, and you those deeds behold.

I see (I cry'd) his woes, a countless train;
 I see his friends o'erwhelm'd beneath the main;
 How twice ten years from shore to shore he roams: 205
 Now twice ten years are past, and now he comes!

To whom Eurymachus—Fly, dotard, fly!
 With thy wise dreams, and fables of the sky.
 Go prophecy at home; thy sons advise:
 Here thou art sage in vain—I better read the skies. 210
 Unnumber'd birds glide through th' ærial way,
 Vagrants of air, and unforeboding stray.
 Cold in the tomb, or in the deeps below,
 Ulysses lies: oh, wert thou laid as low!
 Then would that busy head no broils suggest, 215
 Nor fire to rage Telemachus's breast.
 From him some bribe thy venal tongue requires,
 And interest, not the God, thy voice inspires.
 His guideless youth, if thy experienc'd age
 Mislead fallacious into idle rage, 220
 Vengeance deserv'd thy malice shall repress,
 And but augment the wrongs thou would'st redress.
 Telemachus may bid the queen repair
 To great Icarius, whose paternal care
 Will guide her passion, and reward her choice, 225
 With wealthy dower, and bridal gifts of price.
 Till she retires, determin'd we remain,
 And both the prince and augur threat in vain:
 His pride of words, and thy wild dream of fate,
 Move not the brave, or only move their hate. 230
 Threat on, O Prince! elude the bridal day,
 Threat on, till all thy stores in waste decay.

True,

True, Greece affords a train of lovely dames,
In wealth and beauty worthy of our flames :
But never from this nobler fuit we cease ;
For wealth and beauty less than virtue please.

235

To whom the youth : Since then in vain I tell
My numerous woes, in silence let them dwell.
But Heaven, and all the Greeks, have heard my wrongs :
To Heaven, and all the Greeks, redress belongs. 240
Yet this I ask, (nor be it ask'd in vain)
A bark to waft me o'er the rolling main ;
The realms of Pyle and Sparta to explore,
And seek my royal fire from shore to shore :
If, or to Fame his doubtful Fate be known, 245
Or to be learn'd from oracles alone ?
If yet he lives ; with patience I forbear,
Till the fleet hours restore the circling year :
But if already wandering in the train
Of empty shades ; I measure back the main, 250
Plant the fair column o'er the mighty dead,
And yield his consort to the nuptial bed.

He ceas'd ; and while the peers abash'd attend,
Mentor arose, Ulysses' faithful friend :
[When fierce in arms he fought the scenes of war, 255
" My friend, (he cry'd) my palace be thy care ;
" Years roll'd on years my god-like fire decay,
" Guard thou his age, and his behests obey."]
Stern as he rose, he cast his eyes around,
That flash'd with rage ; and as he spoke, he frown'd :
O never, never more ! let king be just,
Be mild in power, or faithful to his trust !

Let tyrants govern with an iron rod,
 Oppress, destroy, and be the scourge of God;
 Since he who like a father held his reign, 265
 So soon forgot, was just and mild in vain!
 True, while my friend is griev'd, his griefs I share;
 Yet now the rivals are my smallest care:
 They, for the mighty mischiefs they devise,
 Ere long shall pay—their forfeit lives the price. 270
 But against you, ye Greeks! ye coward train,
 Gods! how my soul is mov'd with just disdain!
 Dumb ye all stand, and not one tongue affords
 His injur'd prince the little aid of words.

While yet he spoke, Leocritus rejoin'd : 275
 O pride of words, and arrogance of mind!
 Would'st thou to rise in arms the Greeks advise?
 Join all your powers! in arms, ye Greeks, arise!
 Yet would your powers in vain our strength oppose:
 The valiant few o'ermatch an host of foes. 280
 Should great Ulysses stern appear in arms,
 While the bowl circles, and the banquet warms;
 Though to his breast his spouse with transport flies,
 Torn from her breast, that hour, Ulysses dies.
 But hence retreating to your domes repair; 285
 To arm the vessel, Mentor! be thy care,
 And, Halitherses! thine: be each his friend;
 Ye lov'd the father: go, the son attend.
 But yet, I trust, the boaster means to stay
 Safe in the court, nor tempt the watery way. 290

Then, with a rushing sound, th' assembly bend,
 Diverse their steps: the rival rout ascend.

The royal dome; while sad the prince explores
The neighbouring main, and forrowing treads the shores.

There, as the waters o'er his hands he shed, 295

The royal suppliant to Minerva pray'd :

O Goddess! who descending from the skies

Vouchsaf'd thy presence to my wondering eyes,

By whose commands the raging deeps I trace,

And seek my fire through storms and rolling seas! 300

Hear from thy heavens above, oh, warrior-maid!

Descend once more propitious to my aid.

Without thy presence, vain is thy command :

Greece, and the rival train, thy voice withstand.

Indulgent to his prayer the Goddess took 305

Sage Mentor's form, and thus like Mentor spoke :

O prince, in early youth divinely wise,

Born, the Ulysses of thy age to rise!

If to the son the father's worth descends,

O'er the wide waves success thy ways attends : 310

To tread the walks of death he stood prepar'd ;

And what he greatly thought, he nobly dar'd.

Were not wise sons descendants of the wise,

And did not heroes from brave heroes rise :

Vain were my hopes : few sons attain the praise 315

Of their great fires, and most their fires disgrace.

But since thy veins paternal virtue fires,

And all Penelope thy soul inspires :

Go, and succeed! the rivals aims despise ;

For never, never, wicked man was wise. 320

Blind they rejoice, though now, ev'n now they fall ;

Death hastes amain : one hour o'erwhelms them all!

And

And lo, with speed we plough the watery way,
 My power shall guard thee, and my hand convey:
 The winged vessel studious I prepare, 325
 'Through seas and realms companions of thy care.
 Thou to the court ascend: and to the shores
 (When night advances) bear the naval stores;
 Bread, that decaying man with strength supplies,
 And generous wine, which thoughtful sorrow flies 330
 Meanwhile the mariners, by my command,
 Shall speed aboard, a valiant chosen band.
 Wide o'er the bay, by vessel vessel rides;
 The best I chuse to waft thee o'er the tides.

She spoke: to his high dome the prince returns, 335
 And, as he moves, with royal anguish mourns.
 'Twas riot all, among the lawless train;
 Boar bled by boar, and goat by goat lay slain.
 Arriv'd, his hand the gay Antinous prest,
 And, thus deriding, with a smile address: 340

Grieve not, oh, daring prince! that noble heart:
 Ill suits gay youth the stern heroic part;
 Indulge the genial hour, unbend thy soul,
 Leave thought to age, and drain the flowing bowl.
 Studious to ease thy grief, our care provides 345
 The bark, to waft thee o'er the swelling tides.

Is this, returns the prince, for mirth a time?
 When lawless gluttons riot, mirth's a crime;
 The luscious wines, dishonour'd lose their taste;
 The song is noise, and impious is the feast. 350
 Suffice it to have spent with swift decay
 The wealth of kings, and made my youth a prey.

But

But now the wise instructions of the sage,
 And manly thoughts inspir'd by manly age,
 Teach me to seek redress for all my woe, 355
 Here, or in Pyle—in Pyle, or here, your foe.
 Deny your vessels, ye deny in vain;
 A private voyager I pass the main.

Free breathe the winds, and free the billows flow;
 And where on earth I live, I live your foe. 360

He spoke and frown'd, nor longer deign'd to stay,
 Sternly his hand withdrew, and strode away.
 Meantime, o'er all the dome, they quaff, they feast,
 Derisive taunts were spread from guest to guest,
 And each in jovial mood his mate address: 365 }

Tremble ye not, oh friends! and coward fly,
 Doom'd by the stern Telemachus to die?
 To Pyle or Sparta to demand supplies,
 Big with revenge, the mighty warrior flies:
 Or comes from Ephyre with poisons fraught, 370
 And kills us all in one tremendous draught?

Or, who can say (his gamesome mate replies)
 But, while the dangers of the deeps he tries,
 He, like his fire, may sink depriv'd of breath,
 And punish us unkindly by his death? 375

What mighty labours would he then create,
 To seize his treasures, and divide his state,
 The royal palace to the queen convey,
 Or him she blesses in the bridal day!
 Meantime the lofty rooms the prince surveys, 380
 Where lay the treasures of th' Ithacian race:

Here

But

Here ruddy brass and gold refulgent blaz'd;
 There polish'd chests embroider'd vestures grac'd;
 Here jars of oil breath'd forth a rich perfume;
 There casks of wine in rows adorn'd the dome 385
 (Pure flavoured wine, by Gods in bounty given,
 And worthy to exalt the feasts of heaven).
 Untouch'd they stood, till, his long labours o'er,
 The great Ulysses reach'd his native shore.
 A double strength of bars secur'd the gates: 390
 Fast by the door the wise Euryclea waits;
 Euryclea, who, great Ops! thy lineage shar'd,
 And watch'd all night, all day; a faithful guard.

To whom the prince : O thou, whose guardian
 care

Nurs'd the most wretched king that breathes the air:
 Untouch'd and sacred may these vessels stand,
 Till great Ulysses views his native land.
 But by thy care twelve urns of wine be fill'd;
 Next these in worth, and firm those urns be seal'd;
 And twice ten measures of the choicest flour 400
 Prepar'd, ere yet descends the evening hour.
 For when the favouring shades of night arise,
 And peaceful slumbers close my mother's eyes,
 Me from our coast shall spreading sails convey,
 To seek Ulysses through the watery way. 405

While yet he spoke, she fill'd the walls with cries,
 And tears ran trickling from her aged eyes.
 Oh whither, whither flies my son? she cry'd,
 To realms, that rocks and roaring seas divide?

ODYSSEY, BOOK II.

77

In foreign lands thy father's days decay'd,
And foreign lands contain the mighty dead.
The watery way ill-fated if thou try,
All, all must perish, and by fraud you die!
Then stay, my child! storms beat, and rolls the
main;

410

Oh, beat those storms, and roll the seas in vain! 415

Far hence (reply'd the prince) thy fears be driven:

Heaven calls me forth? these counsels are of Heaven.

But, by the powers that hate the perjur'd, swear,

To keep my voyage from the royal ear,

Nor uncompell'd the dangerous truth betray, 420

Till twice six times descends the lamp of day:

Lest the sad tale a mother's life impair,

And grief destroy what time a while would spare.

Thus he. The matron with uplifted eyes

Attests th' all-seeing Sovereign of the skies. 425

Then studious she prepares the choicest flour.

The strength of wheat, and wines an ample store.

While to the rival train the prince returns,

The martial Goddess with impatience burns;

Like thee, Telemachus, in voice and size, 430

With speed divine from street to street she flies,

She bids the mariners prepar'd, to stand,

When night descends, embody'd on the strand.

Then to Noëmon swift she runs, she flies,

And asks a bark: the chief a bark supplies. 435

And now, declining with his sloping wheel,

Down sunk the sun behind the western hills.

The

The Goddess shov'd the vessel from the shores,
 And stow'd within its womb the naval stores.
 Full in the openings of the spacious main
 It rides ; and now descends the sailor-train. 440

Next, to the court, impatient of delay,
 With rapid step the Goddess urg'd her way :
 There every eye with slumberous chains she bound,
 And dash'd the flowing goblet to the ground, 445
 Drowsy they rose, with heavy fumes oppress'd,
 Reel'd from the palace, and retir'd to rest.

Then thus, in Mentor's reverend form array'd,
 Spoke to Telemachus the martial maid.

Lo ! on the seas, prepar'd the vessel stands, 450
 Th' impatient mariner thy speed demands.
 Swift as she spoke, with rapid pace she leads ;
 The footsteps of the Deity he treads.

Swift to the shore they move : along the strand
 The ready vessel rides, the sailors ready stand 455

He bids them bring their stores ; th' attending
 train

Load the tall bark, and launch into the main.
 The Prince and Goddess to the stern ascend ;
 To the strong stroke at once the rowers bend.
 Full from the west she bids fresh breezes blow ; 460
 The sable billows foam and roar below.
 The chief his orders gives ; th' obedient band
 With due observance wait the chief's command !
 With speed the mast they rear, with speed unbind
 The spacious sheet, and stretch it to the wind. 465

High

High o'er the roaring waves the spreading sails
 Bow the tall mast, and swell before the gales;
 The crooked keel the parting surge divides,
 And to the stern retreating roll the tides.
 And now they ship their oars, and crown with wine
 The holy goblet to the powers divine:
 Imploring all the Gods that reign above,
 But chief the blue-ey'd progeny of Jove.
 Thus all the night they stem the liquid way,
 And end their voyage with the morning ray.

475

THE

THE
THIRD BOOK
OF THE
ODYSSEY.

Vol. L.

G

A R G U M E N T.

The Interview of Telemachus and Nestor.

TELEMACHUS, guided by Pallas in the shape of Mentor, arrives in the morning at Pylos, where Nestor and his sons are sacrificing on the sea-shore to Neptune. Telemachus declares the occasion of his coming; and Nestor relates what past in their return from Troy, how their fleets were separated, and he never since heard of Ulysses. They discourse concerning the death of Agamemnon, the revenge of Orestes, and the injuries of the suitors. Nestor advises him to go to Sparta, and inquire further of Menelaus. The sacrifice ended with the night, Minerva vanishes from them in the form of an eagle: Telemachus is lodged in the palace. The next morning they sacrifice a bullock to Minerva; and Telemachus proceeds on his journey to Sparta, attended by Pisistratus.

The scene lies on the sea shore of Pylos.

T H E

O D Y S S E Y.

B O O K III.

THE sacred sun, above the waters rais'd,
Through heaven's eternal, brazen portals blaz'd;
And wide o'er earth diffus'd his chearing ray,
To Gods and men to give the golden day.

Now on the coast of Pyle the vessel falls, 5
Before old Neleus' venerable walls.

There, suppliant to the monarch of the flood,
At nine green theatres the Pylians stood,
Each held five hundred (a deputed train),
At each, nine oxen on the sand lay slain. 10

They take the entrails, and the altars load
With smoking thighs, an offering to the God.

Full for the port the Ithacensians stand,
And furl their sails, and issue on the land.

Telemachus already prest the shore; 15

Not first, the Power of Wisdom march'd before,
And, ere the sacrificing throng he join'd,
Admonish'd thus his well-attending mind:

Proceed, my son! this youthful shame expel;
An honest business never blush to tell. 20

To learn what fates thy wretched fire detain,
We pass'd the wide, immeasurable main.

Meet then the senior far renown'd for sense,
With reverend awe, but decent confidence:

Urge him with truth to frame his fair replies; 25
And sure he will: for Wisdom never lies.

Oh, tell me Mentor! tell me, faithful guide,
(The youth with prudent modesty reply'd)
How shall I meet, or how accost the sage,
Unskill'd in speech, nor yet mature of age? 30
Awful th' approach, and hard the task appears,
To question wisely men of riper years.

To whom the martial Goddess thus rejoin'd:
Search, for some thoughts, thy own suggesting mind;
And others, dictated by heavenly power, 35
Shall rise spontaneous in the needful hour.
For nought unprosperous shall thy ways attend,
Born with good omens, and with heaven thy friend.

She spoke, and led the way with swiftest speed:
As swift, the youth pursued the way she led; 40
And join'd the band before the sacred fire,
Where fate, encompass'd with his sons, the fire.
The youth of Pylos, some on pointed wood
Transfix'd the fragments, some prepar'd the food.
In friendly throngs they gather to embrace 45
Their unknown guests, and at the banquet place.
Pisistratus was first, to grasp their hands,
And spread soft hides upon the yellow sands;
Along the shore th' illustrious pair he led,
Where Nestor sat with youthful Thrasymed. 50
To each a portion of the feast he bore,
And held the golden goblet foaming o'er;
Then first approaching to the elder guest,
The latent Goddess in these words address:

Whoe'er

Whoe'er thou art, whom Fortune brings to keep 55

The rites of Neptune, monarch of the deep,

The first it fits, oh stranger! to prepare

Thee due libation and the solemn prayer :

Then give thy friend to shed the sacred wine :

Though much thy younger, and his years like mine, } 60

He too, I deem, implores the Powers divine :

For all mankind alike require their grace,

All born to want ; a miserable race !

He spake, and to her hand preferr'd the bowl :

A secret pleasure touch'd Athena's soul, 65

To see the preference due to sacred age

Regarded ever by the just and sage.

Of Ocean's king she then implores the grace :

Oh, thou ! whose arms this ample globe embrace,

Fulfil our wish, and let thy glory shine 70

On Nestor first, and Nestor's royal line ;

Next grant the Pylian states their just desires,

Pleas'd with their hecatomb's ascending fires ;

Last deign Telemachus and me to bless,

And crown our voyage with desir'd success. 75

Thus she ; and, having paid the rite divine,

Gave to Ulysses' son the rosy wine.

Suppliant he pray'd. And, now the victims drest,

They draw, divide, and celebrate the feast.

The banquet done, the narrative old man, 80

Thus mild, the pleasing conference began :

Now, gentle guests ! the genial banquet o'er,

It fits to ask you, what your native shore,

And whence your race? on what adventure, say,
 Thus far ye wander through the watery way? 85
 Relate(if business, or the thirst of gain,
 Engage your journey o'er the pathless main:
 Where savage pirates seek through seas unknown
 The lives of others, venturous of their own.

Urg'd by the precepts by the Goddess given, 90
 And fill'd with confidence infus'd from heaven,
 The youth, whom Pallas destin'd to be wise
 And fam'd among the sons of men, replies:
 Inquir'st thou, father! from what coast we came?
 (Oh, grace and glory of the Grecian name!) 95
 From where high Ithaca o'erlooks the floods,
 Brown with o'er-arching shades and pendent woods,
 Us to these shores our filial duty draws,
 A private sorrow, not a public cause.

My fire I seek, where-e'er the voice of Fame 100
 Has told the glories of his noble name,
 The great Ulysses; fam'd from shore to shore
 For valour much, for hardy suffering more.
 Long time with thee before proud Ilion's wall,
 In arms he fought; with thee beheld her fall. 105
 Of all the chiefs, this hero's fate alone
 Has Jove reserv'd, unheard of, and unknown;
 Whether in fields by hostile fury slain,
 Or sunk by tempests in the gulphy main?
 Of this to learn, oppress'd with tender fears, 110
 Lo! at thy knee his suppliant son appears.
 If or thy certain eye, or curious ear,
 Have learnt his fate, the whole dark story clear:

And,

ODYSSEY, Book III.

37

And, oh! whate'er heaven destin'd to betide,

Let neither flattery smooth, nor pity hide.

115

Prepar'd I stand : he was but born to try

The lot of man ; to suffer and to die.

Oh then, if ever through the ten years war

The wise, the good Ulysses claim'd thy care ;

If e'er he join'd thy council, or thy sword,

120

True in his deed, and constant to his word :

Far as thy mind through backward time can see,

Search all thy stores of faithful memory :

'Tis sacred Truth I ask, and ask of thee.

}

To him experienc'd Nestor thus rejoin'd :

125

O friend ! what sorrows dost thou bring to mind ?

Shall I the long laborious scene review,

And open all the wounds of Greece anew ?

What toils by sea ! where dark in quest of prey

Dauntless we rov'd, Achilles led the way :

130

What toils by land ! where mix'd in fatal fight

Such numbers fell, such heroes sunk to night :

There Ajax great, Achilles there the brave,

There wise Patroclus, fill an early grave :

There too my son—ah, once my best delight,

135

Once swift of foot, and terrible in fight ;

In whom stern courage with soft virtue join'd,

A faultless body, and a blameless mind :

Antilochus—what more can I relate ?

How trace the tedious series of our fate ?

140

Not added years on years my task could close,

The long historian of my country's woes :

Back to thy native islands might'st thou sail,

And leave half-heard the melancholy tale.

Nine painful years on that detested shore ;
 What stratagems we form'd, what toils we bore!
 Still labouring on, till scarce at last we found
 Great Jove propitious, and our conquest crown'd.
 Far o'er the rest thy mighty father shin'd,
 In wit, in prudence, and in force of mind.
 Art thou the son of that illustrious fire ?
 With joy I grasp thee, and with love admire.
 So like your voices, and your words so wise,
 Who finds thee younger must consult his eyes.
 Thy fire and I were one ; nor vary'd ought
 In public sentence, or in private thought ;
 Alike to council or th' assembly came,
 With equal souls, and sentiments the same.
 But when (by Wisdom won) proud Ilion burn'd,
 And in their ships the conquering Greeks return'd ;
 'Twas God's high will the victors to divide,
 And turn th' event, confounding human pride :
 Some he destroy'd, some scatter'd as the dust,
 (Not all were prudent, and not all were just).
 Then Discord, sent by Pallas from above,
 Stern daughter of the great avenger Jove,
 The brother-kings inspir'd with fell debate ;
 Who call'd to council all th' Achaian state,
 But call'd untimely (not the sacred rite
 Observ'd, nor heedful of the setting light,
 Nor herald sworn the session to proclaim).
 Sour with debauch a reeling tribe they came.
 To these the cause of meeting they explain,
 And Menelaüs moves to cross the main ;

Not so the King of Men: he will'd to stay: 175
 These sacred rites and hecatombs to pay,
 And calm Minerva's wrath. Oh, blind to Fate!
 The Gods not lightly change their love, or hate.
 With ireful taunts each other they oppose,
 Till in loud tumult all the Greeks arose. 180
 Now different counsels every breast divide,
 Each burns with rancour to the adverse side:
 Th' unquiet night strange projects entertain'd
 (So Jove, that urg'd us to our fate, ordain'd).
 We with the rising morn our ships unmoor'd, 185
 And brought our captives and our stores aboard;
 But half the people with respect obey'd
 The King of Men, and at his bidding stay'd.
 Now on the wings of winds our course we keep
 (For God had smooth'd the waters of the deep); 190
 For Tenedos we spread our eager oars,
 There land, and pay due victims to the Powers:
 To bless our safe return we join in prayer;
 But angry Jove dispers'd our vows in air,
 And rais'd new discord. Then (so Heaven decreed)
 Ulysses first and Nestor disagreed:
 Wise as he was, by various counsels sway'd,
 He there, though late, to please the monarch, stay'd.
 But I, determin'd, stem the foamy floods,
 Warn'd of the coming fury of the Gods. 200
 With us, Tydides fear'd, and urg'd his haste:
 And Menelaüs came, but came the last.
 He join'd our vessels in the Lesbian bay,
 While yet we doubted of our watery way;

If

If to the right to urge the pilot's toil,
 (The safer road) beside the Pfyrian isle;
 Or the straight course to rocky Chios plow,
 And anchor under Mima's shaggy brow?
 We sought direction of the Power divine:
 The God propitious gave the guiding sign;
 Through the mild seas he bid our navy steer,
 And in Eubœa shun the woes we fear.
 The whistling winds already wak'd the sky;
 Before the whistling winds the vessels fly,
 With rapid swiftness cut the liquid way,
 And reach Gerekus at the point of day.
 There hecatombs of bulls, to Neptune slain.
 High-flaming please the monarch of the main.
 The fourth day shone, when all their labours o'er
 Tydides' vessels touch'd the wish'd-for shore.
 But I to Pylos scud before the gales,
 The Gods still breathing on my swelling sails;
 Separate from all, I safely landed here;
 Their fates or fortunes never reach'd my ear.
 Yet what I learn'd, attend; as here I sate,
 And ask'd each voyager each hero's fate;
 Curious to know, and willing to relate.

Safe reach'd the Myrmidons their native land,
 Beneath Achilles' warlike son's command.
 Those, whom the heir of great Apollo's art,
 Brave Philoctetes, taught to wing the dart;
 And those whom Idomen from Ilion's plain
 Had led, securely cross'd the dreadful main.
 How Agamemnon touch'd his Argive coast,
 And how his life by fraud and force he lost,

And how the murderer paid his forfeit breath ;
 What lands so distant from that scene of death
 But trembling heard the fame ? and, heard, admire
 How well the son appeas'd the slaughter'd fire !
 Ev'n to th' unhappy, that unjustly bleed, 240

Heaven gives posterity, t' avenge the deed.
 So fell Ægysthus ; and may'st thou, my friend,
 (On whom the virtues of thy sire descend)
 Make future times thy equal act adore,
 And be what brave Orestes was before ! 245

The prudent youth reply'd : O thou the grace
 And lasting glory of the Grecian race !
 Just was the vengeance, and to latest days
 Shall long posterity resound the praise.

Some God this arm with equal prowess blefs ! 250
 And the proud suitors shall its force confess :
 Injurious men ! who while my soul is sore
 Of fresh affronts, are meditating more.

But Heaven denies this honour to my hand,
 Nor shall my father repofses the land : 255

The father's fortune never to return,
 And the sad son's to suffer and to mourn ?

Thus he ; and Nestor took the word : My son,
 Is it then true, as distant rumours run,
 That crouds of rivals for thy mother's charms 260
 Thy palace fill with insults and alarms ?

Say, is the fault, through tame submission, thine ?
 Or, leagued against thee, do thy people join, }
 Mov'd by some oracle, or voice divine ? }

And yet who knows, but ripening lies in fate 265
 An hour of vengeance for th' afflicted state ;

When great Ulysses shall suppress these harms,
 Ulysses singly, or all Greece in arms.
 But if Athena, war's triumphant maid,
 The happy son will, as the father, aid,
 (Whose fame and safety was her constant care
 In every danger and in every war :
 Never on man did heavenly favour shine
 With rays so strong, distinguish'd, and divine,
 As those with which Minerva mark'd thy fire)
 So might she love thee, so thy soul inspire!
 Soon should their hopes in humble dust be laid,
 And long oblivion of the bridal bed.

Ah! no such hope (the prince with sighs replies)
 Can touch my breast; that blessing Heaven denies. 280
 Ev'n by celestial favour were it given,
 Fortune or Fate would cross the will of Heaven.

What words are these, and what imprudence thine?
 (Thus interpos'd the martial Maid divine)
 Forgetful youth! but know, the Power above 285
 With ease can save each object of his love;
 Wide as his will extends his boundless grace:
 Nor lost in time, nor circumscrib'd by place.
 Happier his lot, who, many sorrows past,
 Long labouring gains his natal shore at last; 290
 Than who, too speedy, hastes to end his life
 By some stern ruffian, or adulterous wife.
 Death only is the lot which none can miss,
 And all is possible to Heaven, but this.
 The best, the dearest favourite of the sky 295
 Must taste that cup, for man is born to die.

Thus

Thus check'd, reply'd Ulysses' prudent heir:
 Mentor, no more—the mournful thought forbear;
 For he no more must draw his country's breath,
 Already snatch'd by fate, and the black doom of death!
 Pass we to other subjects; and engage
 On themes remote the venerable sage
 Who thrice has seen the perishable kind
 Of men decay, and through three ages shin'd
 Like Gods majestic, and like Gods in mind). 305 }
 For much he knows, and just conclusions draws,
 From various precedents, and various laws.
 O son of Neleus! awful Nestor, tell
 How he, the mighty Agamemnon, fell?
 By what strange fraud Ægythus wrought, relate 310
 (By force he could not) such a hero's fate?
 Liv'd Menelaüs not in Greece! or where
 Was then the martial brother's pious care?
 Condemn'd perhaps some foreign shore to tread;
 Or sure Ægythus had not dar'd the deed. 315
 To whom the full of days: Illustrious youth!
 Attend (though partly thou hast guest) the truth.
 For had the martial Menelaüs found
 The ruffian breathing yet on Argive ground;
 Nor earth had hid his carcase from the skies, 320
 Nor Grecian virgins shriek'd his obsequies.
 But fowls obscene dismember'd his remains,
 And dogs had torn him on the naked plains.
 While us the works of bloody Mars employ'd,
 The wanton youth inglorious peace enjoy'd; 325
 He, stretch'd at ease in Argos' calm recess,
 (Whose stately steeds luxuriant pastures bless)
 With

With flattery's insinuating art
 Sooth'd the frail queen, and poison'd all her heart.
 At first, with worthy shame and decent pride, 330
 The royal dame his lawless suit deny'd.
 For Virtue's image yet possess'd her mind,
 'Taught by a master of the tuneful kind :
 Atrides, parting from the Trojan war,
 Consign'd the youthful consort to his care. 335
 True to his charge, the bard preserv'd her long
 In honour's limits; such the power of song.
 But when the Gods these objects of their hate
 Dragg'd to destruction, by the links of fate;
 The bard they banish'd from his native soil, 340
 And left all helpless in a desert isle:
 There he, the sweetest of the sacred train,
 Sung dying to the rocks, but sung in vain.
 Then Virtue was no more; her guard away,
 She fell, to lust a voluntary prey. 345
 Ev'n to the temple stalk'd th' adulterous spouse,
 With impious thanks, and mockery of vows,
 With images, with garments, and with gold;
 And odorous fumes from loaded altars roll'd.
 Meantime from flaming Troy we cut the way, 350
 With Menelaüs, through the curling sea.
 But when to Sunium's sacred point we came,
 Crown'd with the temple of th' Athenian dame;
 Atrides' pilot, Phrontes, there expir'd
 (Phrontes, of all the sons of men admir'd 355
 To steer the bounding bark with steady toil,
 When the storm thickens, and the billows boil);

While

While yet he exercis'd the steerman's art,
 Apollo touch'd him with his gentle dart;
 When with the rudder in his hand he fell. 360
 To pay whose honours to the shades of hell,
 We check'd our haste, by pious office bound,
 And laid our old companion in the ground.
 And now, the rites discharg'd, our course we keep
 Far on the gloomy bosom of the deep: 365
 Soon as Malæa's misty tops arise,
 Sudden the Thunderer blackens all the skies,
 And the winds whistle, and the surges roll
 Mountains on mountains, and obscure the pole.
 The tempest scatters and divides our fleet: 370
 Part the storm urges on the coast of Crete,
 Where, winding round the rich Cydonian plain,
 The streams of Jordan issue to the main.
 There stands a rock, high eminent and steep,
 Whose shaggy brow o'erhangs the shady deep, 375
 And views Gortyna on the western side;
 On this rough Auster drove th' impetuous tide:
 With broken force the billows roll'd away,
 And heav'd the fleet into the neighbouring bay;
 Thus sav'd from death, they gain'd the Phæstian shores,
 With shatter'd vessels, and disabled oars:
 But five tall barks the winds and waters tost,
 Far from their fellows on th' Egyptian coast.
 There wander'd Menelaus through foreign shores,
 Amassing gold, and gathering naval stores; 385
 While curst Ægythus the detested deed
 By fraud fulfill'd, and his great brother bled.

Seven years the traitor rich Mycenæ sway'd,
 And his stern rule the groaning land obey'd;
 The eighth, from Athens, to his realm restor'd, 390
 Orestes brandish'd the revenging sword,
 Slew the dire pair, and gave to funeral flame
 The vile assassin, and adulterous dame.
 That day, ere yet the bloody triumphs cease,
 Return'd Atrides to the coast of Greece. 395
 And safe to Argos' port his navy brought,
 With gifts of price and ponderous treasure fraught.
 Hence warn'd, my son, beware! nor idly stand
 Too long a stranger to thy native land;
 Lest heedless absence wear thy wealth away, 400
 While lawless feasters in thy palace sway;
 Perhaps may seize thy realm, and share the spoil;
 And thou return with disappointed toil, }
 From thy vain journey, to a rifled isle. }
 Howe'er, my friend, indulge one labour more, 405
 And seek Atrides on the Spartan shore.
 He, wandering long, a wider circle made,
 And many-languag'd nations has survey'd;
 And measur'd tracts unknown to other ships
 Amid the monstrous wonders of the deeps; 410
 (A length of ocean and unbounded sky,
 Which scarce the sea-fowl in a year o'erfly).
 Go then; to Sparta take the watery way,
 Thy ship and sailors but for orders stay;
 Or, if by land thou chuse thy course to bend, 415
 My steeds, my chariots, and my sons attend:
 Thee to Atrides they shall safe convey,
 Guides of thy road, companions of thy way.

Urge him with truth to frame his free replies,
And sure he will; for Menelaus is wife. 420

Thus while he speaks, the ruddy sun descends,
And twilight grey her evening shade extends.
Then thus the blue-ey'd Maid: O full of days!
Wife are thy words, and just are all thy ways.
Now immolate the tongues, and mix the wine, 425
Sacred to Neptune and the Powers divine.

The lamp of day is quench'd beneath the deep,
And soft approach the balmy hours of sleep:
Nor fits it to prolong the heavenly feast,
Timeless, indecent, but retire to rest. 430

So spake Jove's daughter, the celestial Maid.
The sober train attended and obey'd.
The sacred heralds on their hands around
Pour'd the full urns; the youths the goblets crown'd:
From bowl to bowl the holy beverage flows: 435

While to the final sacrifice they rose.
The tongues they cast upon the fragrant flame,
And pour, above, the consecrated stream.
And now, their thirst by copious draughts allay'd,
The youthful hero and th' Athenian Maid 440

Propose departure from the finish'd rite,
And in their hollow bark to pass the night:
But this the hospitable sage deny'd.
Forbid it Jove! and all the Gods! he cry'd,
Thus from my walls the much-lov'd son to send 445
Of such a hero, and of such a friend!

Me, as some needy peasant, would ye leave,
Whom Heaven denies the blessing to relieve?

VOL. L.

H

Me

Me would you leave, who boast imperial sway,
 When beds of royal state invite your stay?
 No—long as life this mortal shall inspire,
 Or as my children imitate their fire,
 Here shall the wandering stranger find his home,
 And hospitable rites adorn the dome.

450

Well hast thou spoke, (the blue-ey'd Maid replies)
 Belov'd old man! benevolent as wife.

Be the kind dictates of thy heart obey'd,
 And let thy words Telemachus persuade :
 He to thy palace shall thy steps pursue ;
 I to the ship to give the orders due,
 Prescribe directions, and confirm the crew.

460

For I alone sustain their naval cares,
 Who boast experience from these silver hairs ;
 All youths the rest, whom to this journey move
 Like years, like tempers, and their prince's love. 465
 There in the vessel shall I pass the night ;
 And soon as morning paints the fields of light,
 I go to challenge from the Caucons bold,
 A debt, contracted in the days of old.
 But this thy guest, receiv'd with friendly care, 470
 Let thy strong coursers swift to Sparta bear ;
 Prepare thy chariot at the dawn of day,
 And be thy son companion of his way.

Then turning with the word, Minerva flies,
 And soars an eagle through the liquid skies. 475
 Vision divine! the throng'd spectators gaze
 In holy wonder fix'd, and still amaze.

But chief the reverend sage admir'd ; he took
 The hand of young Telemachus, and spoke :

Oh,

Oh, happy youth! and favour'd of the skies, 480

Distinguish'd care of guardian Deities!

Whose early years for future worth engage,

No vulgar manhood, no ignoble age.

For, lo! none other of the court above

Than she, the daughter of almighty Jove, 485

Pallas herself, the war-triumphant maid,

Confest is thine, as once thy father's aid.

So guide me, Goddess! so propitious shine

On me, my comfort, and my royal line!

A yearling bullock to thy name shall smoke, 490

Untam'd, unconscious of the galling yoke,

With ample forehead, and yet tender horns,

Whose budding honours ductile gold adorns.

Submissive thus the hoary sire preferr'd

His holy vow: the favouring Goddess heard. 495

Then, slowly rising, o'er the sandy space

Precedes the father, follow'd by his race,

(A long procession) timely marching home

In comely order to the regal dome.

There when arriv'd, on thrones around him plac'd,

His sons and grandsons the wide circle grac'd. 470

To these the hospitable sage, in sign

Of social welcome, mix'd the racy wine

(Late from the mellowing cask restor'd to light,

By ten long years refin'd, and rosy-bright). 505

To Pallas high the foaming bowl he crown'd,

And sprinkled large libations on the ground.

Each drinks a full oblivion of his cares,

And to the gifts of balmy sleep repairs.

Deep in a rich alcove the prince was laid, 510
 And slept beneath the pompous colonade ;
 Fast by his side Pisistratus lay spread,
 (In age his equal) on a splendid bed :
 But in an inner court, securely clos'd,
 The reverend Nestor and his queen repos'd. 515
 When now Aurora, daughter of the dawn,
 With rosy lustre purpled o'er the lawn ;
 'The old man early rose, walk'd forth, and sat
 On polish'd stone before his palace-gate :
 With unguents smooth the lucid marble shone, 520
 Where ancient Neleus sat, a rustic throne ;
 But he descending to th' infernal shade,
 Sage Nestor fill'd it, and the sceptre sway'd.
 His sons around him mild obeisance pay,
 And duteous take the orders of the day. 525
 First Echephron and Stratius quit their bed :
 Then Perseus, Aretus, and Thrasymed ;
 The last Pisistratus arose from rest :
 They came, and near him plac'd the stranger-guest.
 To these the senior thus declar'd his will : 530
 My sons ! the dictates of your fire fulfil.
 To Pallas, first of Gods, prepare the feast,
 Who grac'd our rites, a more than mortal guest.
 Let one, dispatchful, bid some swain to lead
 A well-fed bullock from the grassy mead ; 535
 One seek the harbour where the vessels moor,
 And bring thy friends, Telemachus ! ashore
 (Leave only two the galley to attend) ;
 Another to Laerceus must we send,

Artist divine, whose skilful hands infold
The victim's horn with circumfusile gold. 540

The rest may here the pious duty share,
And bid the handmaids for the feast prepare,
The seats to range, the fragrant wood to bring,
And limpid waters from the living spring. 545

He said, and busy each his care bestow'd :
Already at the gates the bullock low'd,
Already came the Ithacensian crew,
The dextrous smith the tools already drew :
His ponderous hammer, and his anvil sound, 550
And the strong tongs to turn the metal round.

Nor was Minerva absent from the rite,
She view'd her honours, and enjoy'd the sight.
With reverend hand the king presents the gold,
Which round th' intorted horns the gilder roll'd, }
So wrought, as Pallas might with pride behold. }

Young Aretus from forth his bridal bower
Brought the full laver, o'er their hands to pour, }
And canisters of consecrated flour. }

Stratius and Echephron the victim led ; 560
The ax was held by warlike Thrasymed,
In act to strike : before him Perseus stood,
The vase extending to receive the blood.

The king himself initiates to the Power ;
Scatters with quivering hand the sacred flour, 565

And the stream sprinkles : from the curling brows
The hair collected in the fire he throws.

Soon as due vows on every part were paid,

And sacred wheat upon the victim laid,

Strong Thraſymed diſcharg'd the ſpeeding blow 570
 Full on his neck, and cut the nerves in two.
 Down ſunk the heavy beaſt : the females round,
 Maids, wives, and matrons, mix a ſhrilling ſound,
 Nor ſcorn'd the queen the holy choir to join
 (The firſt-born ſhe, of old Clymenus' line; 575
 In youth by Neſtor lov'd, of ſpotleſs fame,
 And lov'd in age, Eurydice her name).
 From earth they rear him, ſtruggling now with death;
 And Neſtor's youngſt ſtops the vents of breath.
 The ſoul for ever flies : on all ſides round 580
 Streams the black blood, and ſmokes upon the ground,
 The beaſt they then divide, and diſunite
 The ribs and limbs, obſervant of the rite :
 On theſe, in double cawls involv'd with art,
 The choiceſt morſels lay from every part. 585
 The ſacred ſage before his altar ſtands,
 Turns the burnt-offering with his holy hands,
 And pours the wine, and bids the flames aſpire :
 The youth with inſtruments ſurround the fire,
 The thighs now ſacrific'd, and entrails dreſt, 590
 Th' aſſiſtants part, tranſfix, and broil the reſt.
 While theſe officious tend the rites divine,
 The laſt fair-branch of the Neſtorean line,
 Sweet Polycaste, took the pleaſing toil
 To bathe the prince, and pour the fragrant oil. 595
 O'er his fair limbs a flowery veſt he threw,
 And iſſued, like a God, to mortal view.
 His former ſeat beſide the king he found
 (His people's father with his peers around);

ODYSSEY, Book III.

103

All plac'd at ease the holy banquet join,
And in the dazzling goblet laughs the wine. 600

The rage of thirst and hunger now suppress,
The monarch turns him to his royal guest;
And for the promis'd journey bids prepare
The smooth-hair'd horses, and the rapid car. 605

Observant of his word; the word scarce spoke,
The sons obey, and join them to the yoke.
Then bread and wine a ready handmaid brings,
And presents, such as suit the state of kings.

The glittering seat Telemachus ascends; 610
His faithful guide Pisistratus attends;

With hasty hand the ruling reins he drew:
He lash'd the coursers, and the coursers flew.
Beneath the bounding yoke alike they held
Their equal pace, and smok'd along the field. 615

The towers of Pylos sink, its views decay,
Fields after fields fly back, till close of day:
Then sunk the sun, and darken'd all the way. }

To Phœæ now, Diocleus' stately seat
(Of Alpheus's race), the weary youths retreat. 620

His house affords the hospitable rite,
(And pleas'd they sleep (the blessing of the night).

But when Aurora, daughter of the dawn,
With rosy lustre purpled o'er the lawn;

Again they mount, their journey to renew, 625
And from the sounding portico they flew.

Along the waving fields their way they hold,
The fields receding as the chariot roll'd:

Then slowly sunk the ruddy globe of light,
And o'er the shaded landscape rush'd the night. 630

1871

THE
FOURTH BOOK
OF THE
ODYSSEY.

A R G U M E N T.

The Conference with Menelaus.

TELEMACHUS with Pisistratus arriving at Sparta, is hospitably received by Menelaus, to whom he relates the cause of his coming, and learns from him many particulars of what befel the Greeks since the destruction of Troy. He dwells more at large upon the prophecies of Proteus to him in his return; from which he acquaints Telemachus, that Ulysses is detained in the island of Calypso.

In the mean time the suitors consult to destroy Telemachus in his voyage home. Penelope is apprized of this; but comforted in a dream by Pallas, in the shape of her sister Iphthima.

T H E
O D Y S S E Y.
B O O K IV.

AND now proud Sparta with their wheels resounds,
Sparta whose walls a range of hills surrounds :
At the fair dome the rapid labour ends ;

Where fate Atrides 'midst his bridal friends,
With double vows invoking Hymen's power, 5
To bless his sons and daughters nuptial hour.

That day, to great Achilles' son resign'd,
Hermione, the fairest of the kind,
Was sent to crown the long-protracted joy,
Espous'd before the final doom of Troy : 10

With steeds and gilded cars, a gorgeous train
Attend the nymph to Phthia's distant reign.
Meanwhile at home, to Megapenthes' bed
The virgin-choir Alector's daughter led.

Brave Megapenthes, from a stol'n amour 15
To great Atrides' age his handmaid bore :
To Helen's bed the Gods alone assign
Hermione, t' extend the regal line ;

On whom a radiant pomp of Graces wait,
Resembling Venus in attractive state. 20

While this gay friendly troop the king surround,
With festival and mirth the roofs resound :

A bard amid the joyous circle sings
High airs, attemper'd to the vocal strings ;

Whilst,

Whilst, warbling to the varied strain, advance 25
 Two sprightly youths to form the bounding dance.
 'Twas then, that, issuing through the palace gate,
 The splendid car roll'd slow in regal state:
 On the bright eminence young Nestor shone,
 And fast beside him great Ulysses' son : 30
 Grave Eteoneus saw the pomp appear,
 And, speeding, thus address'd the royal ear :

Two youths approach, whose semblant features prove
 Their blood devolving from the source of Jove.
 Is due reception deign'd, or must they bend 35
 Their doubtful course to seek a distant friend ?

Insensate ! (with a sigh the king replies)
 Too long; misjudging, have I thought thee wise :
 But sure relentless folly steels thy breast,
 Obdurate to reject the stranger-guest ; 40
 To those dear hospitable rites a foe,
 Which in my wanderings oft reliev'd my woe :
 Fed by the bounty of another's board,
 Till pitying Jove my native realm restor'd—
 Straight be the coursers from the car releas't, 45
 Conduct the youths to grace the genial feast.

The seneschal rebuk'd in haste withdrew ;
 With equal haste a menial train pursue :
 Part led the coursers, from the car enlarg'd,
 Each to a crib with choicest grain furcharg'd ; 50
 Part in a portico, profusely grac'd
 With rich magnificence, the chariot plac'd :
 Then to the dome the friendly pair invite,
 Who eye the dazzling roofs with vast delight ;
 Resplendent

25 Resplendent as the blaze of summer-noon,
 Or the pale radiance of the midnight moon.
 From room to room their eager view they bend;
 Thence to the bath, a beauteous pile, descend;
 Where a bright damsel-train attend the guests
 30 With liquid odours, and embroider'd vests. 60
 Refresh'd, they wait them to the bower of state,
 Where circled with his peers Atrides fate:
 Thron'd next the king, a fair attendant brings
 The purest product of the crystal springs;
 35 High on a massy vase of silver mold, 65
 The burnish'd laver flames with solid gold;
 In solid gold the purple vintage flows,
 And on the board a second banquet rose.
 When thus the king with hospitable port:—
 40 Accept this welcome to the Spartan court; 70
 The waste of nature let the feast repair,
 Then your high lineage and your names declare:
 Say from what scepter'd ancestry ye claim,
 Recorded eminent in deathless fame?
 45 For vulgar parents cannot stamp their race 75
 With signatures of such majestic grace.
 Ceasing, benevolent he straight assigns
 The royal portion of the choicest chimes
 To each accepted friend: with grateful haste
 50 They share the honours of the rich repast. 80
 Suffic'd, soft-whispering thus to Nestor's son,
 His head reclin'd, young Ithacus begun:
 View'st thou unmov'd, O ever-honour'd most!
 These prodigies of art, and wondrous cost!

Above,

Above, beneath, around the palace shines
 'The sumless treasure of exhausted mines :
 'The spoils of elephants the roofs inlay,
 And studded amber darts a golden ray :
 Such, and not nobler, in the realms above,
 My wonder dictates, is the dome of Jove.

The monarch took the word, and grave reply'd :
 Presumptuous are the vaunts, and vain the pride
 Of man, who dares in pomp with Jove contest,
 Unchang'd, immortal, and supremely blest !
 With all my affluence, when my woes are weigh'd, 95
 Envy will own the purchase dearly paid.
 For eight flow-circling years by tempest tost,
 From Cyprus to the far Phœnician coast
 (Sidon the capital), I stretch'd my toil
 'Through regions fatten'd with the flows of Nile. 100
 Next, Æthiopia's utmost bound explore,
 And the parch'd borders of th' Arabian shore :
 'Then warp my voyage on the southern gales,
 O'er the warm Libyan wave to spread my sails :
 That happy clime ! where each revolving year 105
 The teeming ewes a triple offspring bear ;
 And two fair crescents of translucent horn
 'The brows of all their young increase adorn :
 The shepherd swains, with sure abundance blest,
 Or the fat flock and rural dainties feast ; 110
 Nor want of herbage makes the dairy fail,
 But every season fills the foaming pail.
 Whilst, heaping unwish'd wealth, I distant roam ;
 The best of brothers, at his natal home,

ODYSSEY, Book IV.

111

115

120

125

130

140

Declines

By the dire fury of a traitress wife,
Ends the sad evening of a stormy life :
Whence with incessant grief my soul annoy'd,
These riches are possess'd, but not enjoy'd !
My wars, the copious theme of every tongue,
To you, your fathers have recorded long :
How favouring Heaven repaid my glorious toils
With a sack'd palace, and barbaric spoils.
Oh ! had the Gods so large a boon deny'd,
And life, the just equivalent, supply'd
To those brave warriors, who, with glory fir'd,
Far from their country in my cause expir'd !
Still in short intervals of pleasing woe,
Regardful of the friendly dues I owe,
To the glorious dead, for ever dear !
Indulge the tribute of a grateful tear.
But, oh ! Ulysses—deeper than the rest
That sad idea wounds my anxious breast !
My heart bleeds fresh with agonizing pain ;
The bowl and tasteful viands tempt in vain,
Nor sleep's soft power can close my streaming eyes,
When imag'd to my soul his sorrows rise.
No peril in my cause he ceas'd to prove,
His labours equal'd only by my love :
And both alike to bitter fortune born,
For him to suffer, and for me to mourn !
Whether he wanders on some friendless coast,
Or glides in Stygian gloom a pensive ghost,
No fame reveals ; but, doubtful of his doom,
His good old fire with sorrow to the tomb

Declines his trembling steps; untimely care
 Withers the blooming vigour of his heir;
 And the chaste partner of his bed and throne
 Wastes all her widow'd hours in tender moan.

While thus pathetic to the prince he spoke,
 From the brave youth the streaming passion broke: 145
 Studious to veil the grief, in vain repress,
 His face he shrouded with his purple vest:
 The conscious monarch pierc'd the coy disguise,
 And view'd his filial love with vast surprize:
 Dubious to press the tender theme, or wait 155
 To hear the youth enquire his father's fate.

In this suspense bright Helen grac'd the room;
 Before her breath'd a gale of rich perfume.
 So moves, adorn'd with each attractive grace,
 The silver-shafted Goddess of the chace! 160
 The seat of majesty Adraſte brings,
 With art illustrious, for the pomp of kings;
 To spread the pall (beneath the regal chair)
 Of softest woof, is bright Alcippe's care.
 A silver canister, divinely wrought, 165
 In her soft hands the beauteous Phylo brought;
 To Sparta's queen of old the radiant vase
 Alcandra gave, a pledge of royal grace:
 For Polybus her lord (whose sovereign sway
 The wealthy tribes of Pharian Thebes obey), 170
 When to that court Atrides came, careſt
 With vast munificence th' imperial guest:
 Two lavers from the richest ore refin'd,
 With silver tripods, the kind host assign'd;

And

145 And bounteous from the royal treasure told 175
 Ten equal talents of refulgent gold.
 Alcandra, confort of his high command,
 A golden distaff gave to Helen's hand ;
 And that rich vase, with living sculpture wrought,
 150 Which heap'd with wool the beauteous Phylo brought :
 The silken fleece impurpled for the loom,
 Rival'd the hyacinth in vernal bloom.
 The sovereign feat then Jove-born Helen press'd,
 And pleasing thus her scepter'd lord address'd :
 155 Who grace our palace now, that friendly pair, 185
 Speak they their lineage, or their names declare ?
 Uncertain of the truth, yet uncontrol'd,
 Hear me the bodings of my breast unfold.
 With wonder wrapt, on yonder cheek I trace
 160 The feature of the Ulysean race : 190
 Diffus'd o'er each resembling line appear,
 A just similitude, the grace and air
 Of young Telemachus ! the lovely boy,
 Who bless'd Ulysses with a father's joy,
 165 What time the Greeks combin'd their social arms, 195
 To avenge the stain of my ill-fated charms !
 Just is thy thought, the king assenting cries,
 Methinks Ulysses strikes my wondering eyes :
 Full shines the father in the filial frame,
 170 His port, his features, and his shape, the same : 200
 Such quick regards his sparkling eyes bestow ;
 Such wavy ringlets o'er his shoulders flow !
 And when he heard the long disastrous store
 Of cares, which in my cause Ulysses bore ;

And

Dismay'd, heart-wounded with paternal woes, 205
 Above restraint the tide of sorrow rose :
 Cautious to let the gushing grief appear,
 His purple garment veil'd the falling tear.

See there confest, Pisistratus replies,
 The genuine worth of Ithacus the wise ! 210
 Of that heroic fire the youth is sprung,
 But modest awe hath chain'd his timorous tongue,
 Thy voice, O king ! with pleas'd attention heard,
 Is like the dictates of a God rever'd.
 With him at Nestor's high command I came, 215
 Whose age I honour with a parent's name.
 By adverse destiny constrain'd to sue
 For counsel and redress, he sues to you.
 Whatever ill the friendless orphan bears,
 Bereav'd of parents in his infant years, 220
 Still must the wrong'd Telemachus sustain,
 If, hopeful of your aid, he hopes in vain :
 Affianc'd in your friendly power alone,
 The youth would vindicate the vacant throne.

Is Sparta blest, and these desiring eyes 225
 View my friend's son ? (the king exulting cries)
 Son of my friend, by glorious toils approv'd,
 Whose sword was sacred to the man he lov'd :
 Mirrour of constant faith, rever'd, and mourn'd !—
 When Troy was ruin'd, had the chief return'd, 230
 No Greek an equal space had e'er possess'd,
 Of dear affection in my grateful breast.
 I, to confirm the mutual joys we shar'd,
 For his abode a capital prepar'd ;

ODYSSEY, Book IV. 115

Argos the feat of sovereign rule I chose; 235
 Fair in the plan the future palace rose,
 Where my Ulysses and his race might reign,
 And portion to his tribes the wide domain.
 To them my vassals had resign'd a foil,
 With teeming plenty to reward their toil. 240
 There with commutual zeal we both had strove
 In acts of dear benevolence and love :
 Brothers in peace, not rivals in command,
 And death alone dissolv'd the friendly band !
 Some envious Power the blissful scene destroys; 245
 Vanish'd are all the visionary joys :
 The soul of friendship to my hope is lost,
 Fated to wander from his natal coast !
 He ceas'd ; a gust of grief began to rise,
 Fast streams a tide from beauteous Helen's eyes; 250
 Fast for the fire the filial sorrows flow ;
 The weeping monarch swells the mighty woe :
 Thy cheeks, Pisistratus, the tears bedew,
 While pictur'd to thy mind appear'd in view
 Thy martial * brother : on the Phrygian plain 255
 Extended pale, by swarthy Memnon slain !
 But silence soon the son of Nestor broke,
 And, melting with fraternal pity, spoke :
 Frequent, O king, was Nestor wont to raise
 And charm attention with thy copious praise : 260
 To crown thy various gifts, the sage assign'd
 The glory of a firm capacious mind :

Antilochus.

I 2

With

With that superior attribute control
 This unavailing impotence of soul.
 Let not your roof with echoing grief resound, 265
 Now for the feast the friendly bowl is crown'd;
 But when, from dewy shade emerging bright,
 Aurora streaks the sky with orient light,
 Let each deplore his deed: the rites of woe
 Are all, alas! the living can bestow: 270
 O'er the congenial dust injoin'd to shear
 The graceful curl, and drop the tender tear.
 Then, mingling in the mournful pomp with you,
 I'll pay my brother's ghost a warrior's due,
 And mourn the brave Antilochus, a name 275
 Not unrecorded in the rolls of Fame:
 With strength and speed superior form'd, in fight
 To face the foe, or intercept his flight:
 Too early snatch'd by Fate, ere known to me!
 I boast a witness of his worth in thee. 280

Young and mature! (the monarch thus rejoins.)
 In thee renew'd the soul of Nestor shines:
 Form'd by the care of that consummate sage,
 In early bloom an oracle of age.
 Whene'er his influence Jove vouchsafes to shower 285
 To bless the natal, and the nuptial hour;
 From the great fire transmissive to the race,
 The boon devolving gives distinguish'd grace.
 Such, happy Nestor! was thy glorious doom;
 Around thee, full of years, thy offspring bloom, 290
 Expert of arms, and prudent in debate;
 The gifts of heaven to guard thy hoary state.

But now let each becalm his troubled breast,
Wash, and partake serene the friendly feast.
To move thy suit, Telemachus, delay,
Till Heaven's revolving lamp restores the day.

295

He said, Asphalion swift the laver brings;
Alternate all partake the grateful springs:

Then from the rites of purity repair,

And with keen gust the savory viands share.

300

Meantime, with genial joy to warm the soul,

Bright Helen mix'd a mirth-inspiring bowl:

Temper'd with drugs of sovereign use, t' assuage

The boiling bosom of tumultuous rage;

To clear the cloudy front of wrinkled Care,

305

And dry the tearful sluices of Despair:

Charm'd with that virtuous draught, th' exalted mind.

All sense of woe delivers to the wind.

Though on the blazing pile his parent lay,

Or a lov'd brother groan'd his life away,

310

Or darling son, oppress'd by ruffian-force,

Fell breathless at his feet, a mangled corse;

From morn to eve, impassive and serene,

The man entranc'd would view the deathful scene.

These drugs, so friendly to the joys of life,

315

Bright Helen learn'd from Thone's imperial wife;

Who sway'd the sceptre, where prolific Nile

With various simples clothes the fatten'd soil:

With wholesome herbage mix'd, the direful bane

Of vegetable venom taints the plain;

320

From Pæon sprung, their patron-god imparts

To all the Pharian race his healing arts.

The beverage now prepar'd t' inspire the feast,
The circle thus the beauteous queen address'd :

Thron'd in omnipotence, supremest Jove
Tempers the fates of human race above ;
By the firm sanction of his sovereign will,
Alternate are decreed our good and ill.

To feastful mirth be this white hour assign'd,
And sweet discourse, the banquet of the mind.

Myself, assisting in the social joy,
Will tell Ulysses' bold exploit in Troy :

Sole witness of the deed I now declare ;
Speak you (who saw) his wonders in the war.

Seam'd o'er with wounds, which his own sabre gave,
In the vile habit of a village-slave,
'The foe deceiv'd, he pass'd the tented plain,
In Troy to mingle with the hostile train.

In this attire secure from searching eyes,
Till haply piercing through the dark disguise
The chief I challeng'd ; he, whose practis'd wit
Knew all the serpent mazes of deceit,

Eludes my search : but when his form I view'd
Fresh from the bath with fragrant oils renew'd,
His limbs in military purple dress'd ;

Each brightening grace the genuine Greek confess'd.
A previous pledge of sacred faith obtain'd,

Till he the lines and Argive fleet regain'd,
To keep his stay conceal'd ; the chief declar'd
The plans of war against the town prepar'd.

Exploring then the secrets of the state,
He learn'd what best might urge the Dardan fate :

And,

And, safe returning to the Grecian host,
Sent many a shade to Pluto's dreary coast.
Loud grief resounded through the towers of Troy, 355
But my pleas'd bosom glow'd with secret joy :
For then, with dire remorse and conscious shame,
I view'd th' effects of that disastrous flame,
Which, kindled by th' imperious queen of love,
Constrain'd me from my native realm to rove : 360
And oft in bitterness of soul deplor'd
My absent daughter, and my dearer load ;
Admir'd among the first of human race,
For every gift of mind, and manly grace.

Right well, reply'd the king, your speech displays
The matchless merit of the chief you praise :
Heroes in various climes myself have found,
For martial deeds, and depth of thought renown'd :
But Ithacus, unrival'd in his claim,
May boast a title to the loudest fame : 370
In battle calm, he guides the rapid storm,
Wife to resolve, and patient to perform.
What wondrous conduct in the chief appear'd,
When the vast fabrick of the steed we rear'd !
Some Dæmon, anxious for the Trojan doom, 375
Urg'd you with great Deïphobus to come,
T' explore the fraud ; with guile oppos'd to guile,
Slow-pacing thrice around th' insidious pile ;
Each noted leader's name you thrice invoke,
Your accent varying as their spouses spoke : 380
The pleasing sounds each latent warrior warm'd
But most Tydides' and my heart alarm'd :

To quit the steed we both impatient press,
 Threatening to answer from the dark recess,
 Unmov'd the mind of Ithacus remain'd: 385
 And the vain ardours of our love restrain'd:
 But Anticlus, unable to control,
 Spoke loud the language of his yearning soul:
 Ulysses straight, with indignation fir'd,
 (For so the common care of Greece requir'd) 390
 Firm to his lips his forceful hands apply'd,
 Till on his tongue the fluttering murmurs dy'd.
 Meantime Minerva, from the fraudulent horse,
 Back to the court of Priam bent your course.

Inclement Fate! Telemachus replies, 395
 Frail is the boasted attribute of wise:
 The leader, mingling with the vulgar host,
 Is in the common mass of matter lost!
 But now let sleep the painful waste repair
 Of sad reflection, and corroding care. 400

He ceas'd; the menial fair that round her wait,
 At Helen's beck prepare the room of state;
 Beneath an ample portico, they spread
 The downy fleece to form the slumberous bed;
 And o'er soft palls of purple grain, unfold 405
 Rich tapestry, stiff with inwoven gold:
 Then, through th' illumin'd dome, to balmy rest
 Th' obsequious herald guides each princely guest:
 While to his regal bower the king ascends,
 And beauteous Helen on her lord attends. 410

Soon as the morn, in orient purple drest,
 Unbarr'd the portal of the roseate east,

The

O D Y S S E Y, Book IV.

121

The monarch rose ; magnificent to view,
Th' imperial mantle o'er his vest he threw :
The glittering zone athwart his shoulder cast, 415

A starry faulchion low-depending grac'd ;
Clasp'd on his feet th' embroider'd sandals shine ;
And forth he moves, majestic and divine :
Instant to young Telemachus he press'd,
And thus benevolent his speech address'd : 420

Say, royal youth, sincere of soul, report
What cause hath led you to the Spartan court ?
Do public or domestic cares constrain
This toilsome voyage o'er the surgy main ?

O highly-favour'd delegate of Jove ! 425

(Replies the prince) inflam'd with filial love,
And anxious hope, to hear my parent's doom,
A suppliant to your royal court I come.

Our sovereign seat a lewd usurping race
With lawless riot and misrule disgrace ; 430
To pamper'd insolence devoted fall

Prime of the flock, and choicest of the stall :
For wild ambition wings their bold desire,
And all to mount th' imperial bed aspire.

But prostrate I implore, oh king ! relate 435
The mournful series of my father's fate :

Each known disaster of the man disclose,
Born by his mother to a world of woes !

Recite them ! nor in erring pity fear
To wound with storied grief the filial ear : 440

If e'er Ulysses, to reclaim your right,
Avow'd his zeal in council or in fight

If

If Phrygian camps the friendly toils attest,
To the fire's merit give the son's request.

Deep from his inmost soul Atrides sigh'd, 445
And thus indignant to the prince reply'd :
Heavens! would a soft, inglorious dastard train
An absent hero's nuptial joys profane!
So with her young, amid the woodland shades,
A timorous hind the lion's court invades, 450
Leaves in that fatal lair the tender fawns,
Climbs the green cliff, or feeds the flowery lawns:
Meantime return'd, with dire remorseless sway
The monarch savage rends the trembling prey.
With equal fury, and with equal fame, 455
Ulysses soon shall re-assert his claim.

O Jove, supreme, whom Gods and men revere!
And thou * to whom 'tis given to gild the sphere!
With power congenial join'd, propitious aid
The chief adopted by the martial Maid! 460
Such to our wish the warrior soon restore,
As when contending on the Lesbian shore
His prowess Philomelidus confess'd,
And loud-acclaiming Greeks the victor blest'd :
Then soon th' invaders of his bed and throne 465
Their love presumptuous shall with life atone.
With patient ear, O royal youth! attend
The storied labours of thy father's friend :
Fruitful of deeds, the copious tale is long,
But truth severe shall dictate to my tongue: 470
Learn what I heard the sea-born seer relate,
Whose eye can pierce the dark recess of Fate.

* Apollo.

Long

Long on th' Ægyptian coast by calms confin'd,
 Heaven to my fleet refus'd a prosperous wind :
 No vows had we preferr'd, nor victim slain ! 475
 For this the Gods each favouring gale restrain :
 Jealous, to see their high behests obey'd ;
 Severe, if men th' eternal rights evade.
 High o'er a gulfy sea, the Pharian isle
 Fronts the deep roar of disemboguing Nile : 480
 Her distance from the shore, the course begun
 At dawn, and ending with the setting sun,
 A galley measures ; when the stiffer gales
 Rise on the poop, and fully stretch the sails.
 There, anchor'd vessels safe in harbour lie, 485
 Whilst limpid springs the sailing cask supply.

And now the twentieth sun, descending, laves
 His glowing axle in the western waves ;
 Still with expanded sails we court in vain
 Propitious winds, to waft us o'er the main : 490
 And the pale mariner at once deploras
 His drooping vigour, and exhausted stores,
 When, lo ! a bright cœrulean form appears,
 The fair Eidothea ! to dispel my fears ;
 Proteus her sire divine. With pity press'd, 495
 Me sole the daughter of the deep address'd ;
 What-time, with hunger pin'd, my absent mates
 Roam the wild isle in search of rural cates,
 Bait the barb'd steel, and from the fishy flood
 Appease th' afflictive fierce desires of food. 500

Whoe'er thou art (the azure Goddess cries)
 Thy conduct ill deserves the praise of wise :

Is

Is death thy choice, or misery thy boast,
 'That here inglorious on a barren coast
 'Thy brave associates droop, a meagre train
 With famine pale, and ask thy care in vain? 505

Struck with the kind reproach, I straight reply;
 Whate'er thy title in thy native sky,
 A Goddess sure! for more than mortal grace
 Speaks the descendant of ætherial race: 510
 Deem not, that here of choice my fleet remains;
 Some heavenly power averse my stay constrains:
 O, piteous of my fate, vouchsafe to shew
 (For what's sequester'd from celestial view?)
 What power becalms th' innavigable seas? 515
 What guilt provokes him, and what vows appease?

I ceas'd, when affable the Goddess cry'd;
 Observe, and in the truths I speak confide:
 'Th' oraculous seer frequents the Pharian coast,
 From whose high bed my birth divine I boast: 520
 Proteus, a name tremendous o'er the main,
 The delegate of Neptune's watery reign.
 Watch with insidious care his known abode;
 There fast in chains constrain the various God:
 'Who bound, obedient to superior force, 525
 Unerring will prescribe your destin'd course.
 If, studious of your realms, you then demand
 Their state, since last you left your natal land;
 Instant the God obsequious will disclose
 Bright tracks of glory, or a cloud of woes. 530

She ceas'd, and suppliant thus I made reply:
 O Goddess! on thy aid my hopes rely;

Dictate

Dictate propitious to my duteous ear,
 What arts can captivate the changeful feer?
 For perilous th' assay, unheard the toil,
 T' elude the prescience of a God by guile.
 Thus to the Goddess mild my suit I end.

Then she: Obedient to my rule, attend:
 When through the zone of Heaven the mounted sun
 Hath journey'd half, and half remains to run;
 The feer, while zephyrs curl the swelling deep,
 Basks on the breezy shore, in grateful sleep,
 His oozy limbs. Emerging from the wave,
 The Phocæ swift surround his rocky cave,
 Frequent and full; the consecrated train
 Of * her, whose azure trident awes the main:
 There wallowing warm, th' enormous herd exhales
 An oily steam, and taints the noon-tide gales.
 To that recess, commodious for surprize,
 When purple light shall next suffuse the skies,
 With me repair; and from thy warrior band
 Three chosen chiefs of dauntless soul command:
 Let their auxiliar force befriend the toil:
 For strong the God, and perfected in guile.
 Stretch'd on the shelly shore, he first surveys
 The flouncing herd ascending from the seas;
 Their number summ'd, repos'd in sleep profound
 The scaly charge their guardian God surround:
 So with his battering flocks the careful swain
 Abides, pavilion'd on the grassy plain.
 With powers united, obstinately bold
 Havade him, couch'd amid the scaly fold:

* Amphitrite.

Instant

Instant he wears, elusive of the rape,
 The mimic force of every savage shape :
 Or glides with liquid lapse a murmuring stream, 565
 Or, wrapt in flame, he glows at every limb.
 Yet still retentive, with redoubled might,
 Through each vain passive form constrain his flight.
 But when, his native shape resum'd, he stands
 Patient of conquest, and your cause demands ; 570
 The cause that urg'd the bold attempt declare,
 And soothe the vanquish'd with a victor's prayer.
 The bands relax'd, implore the seer to say
 What godhead interdicts the watery way ?
 Who straight, propitious, in prophetic strain 575
 Will teach you to repass th' unmeasur'd main.
 She ceas'd, and, bounding from the shelvy shore,
 Round the descending nymph the waves resounding
 roar.

High wrapt in wonder of the future deed,
 With joy impetuous, to the port I speed : 580
 The wants of nature with repast suffice,
 'Till night with grateful shade involv'd the skies,
 And shed ambrosial dews. Fast by the deep,
 Along the tented shore, in balmy sleep,
 Our cares were lost. When o'er the eastern lawn, 585
 In saffron robes, the daughter of the dawn
 Advanc'd her rosy steps, before the bay,
 Due ritual honours to the Gods I pay ;
 Then seek the place the sea-born nymph assign'd,
 With three associates of undaunted mind. 590
 Arriv'd,

Arriv'd, to form along th' appointed strand
 For each a bed, she scoops the hilly sand:
 Then, from her azure car, the finny spoils
 Of four vast Phocæ takes, to veil her wiles:
 Beneath the finny spoils, extended prone, 595

Hard toil! the prophet's piercing eye to shun;
 New from the corse, the scaly frauds diffuse
 Unfavorly stench of oil, and brackish ooze;
 But the bright sea-maid's gentle power implor'd,
 With nectar'd drops the sickening sense restor'd. 600

Thus till the sun had travel'd half the skies,
 Ambush'd we lie, and wait the bold emprise:
 When, thronging thick to bask in open air,
 The flocks of Ocean to the strand repair:
 Couch'd on the sunny sand, the monsters sleep: 605

Then Proteus, mounting from the hoary deep,
 Surveys his charge, unknowing of deceit
 (In order told, we make the fum compleat).
 Pleas'd with the false review, secure he lies,
 And leaden slumbers press his drooping eyes. 610

Rushing impetuous forth, we straight prepare
 A furious onset with the sound of war,
 And shouting seize the God: our force t' evade,
 His various arts he soon resumes in aid:
 A lion now he curls a surgy mane; 615

Sudden, our bands a spotted pard restrain;
 Then, arm'd with tusks, and lightning in his eyes,
 A boar's obscener shape the God belies:

On spiry volumes, there, a dragon rides;
 Here, from our strict embrace a stream he glides: 620
 And

And last, sublime his stately growth he rears,
 A tree, and well-dissembled foliage wears.
 Vain efforts! with superior power compress'd,
 Me with reluctance thus the seer address'd :
 Say, son of Atreus, say what God inspir'd
 This daring fraud, and what the boon desir'd ?

625

I thus; O thou whose certain eye foresees
 The fix'd event of Fate's remote decrees ;
 After long woes, and various toil endur'd,
 Still on this desert isle my fleet is moor'd ;
 Unfriended of the gales. All-knowing! say,
 What Godhead interdicts the watery way ?
 What vows repentant will the power appease,
 To speed a prosperous voyage o'er the seas?

630

To Jove (with stern regard the God replies) 635
 And all th' offended synod of the skies,
 Just hecatombs with due devotion slain,
 Thy guilt absolv'd, a prosperous voyage gain.
 To the firm sanction of thy fate attend !
 An exile thou, nor cheering face of friend, 640
 Nor sight of natal shore, nor regal dome
 Shalt yet enjoy, but still art doom'd to roam.
 Once more the Nile, who from the secret source
 Of Jove's high seat descends with sweepy force,
 Must view his billows white beneath thy oar, 645
 And altars blaze along his sanguine shore.
 Then will the Gods, with holy pomp ador'd,
 To thy long vows a safe return accord.

He ceas'd : heart-wounded with afflictive pain,
 Doom'd to repeat the perils of the main,

650

A shelly tract and long ! O seer, I cry,
 To the stern sanction of th' offended sky
 My prompt obedience bows. But deign to say,
 What fate propitious, or what dire dismay,
 Sustain those peers, the reliques of our host, 655
 Whom I with Nestor on the Phrygian coast
 Embracing left ? Must I the warriors weep,
 Whelm'd in the bottom of the monstrous deep ?
 Or did the kind domestic friend deplore
 The breathless heroes on their native shore ? 660

Prefs not too far, reply'd the God ; but cease
 To know, what known will violate thy peace :
 Too curious of their doom ! with friendly woe
 Thy breast will heave, and tears eternal flow.
 Part live ! the rest, a lamentable train ! 665
 Range the dark bounds of Pluto's dreary reign.
 Two, foremost in the roll of Mars renown'd,
 Whose arms with conquest in thy cause were crown'd,
 Fell by disastrous fate ; by tempests tost,
 A third lives wretched on a distant coast. 670

By Neptune rescued from Minerva's hate,
 On Gyraë, safe Oïlean Ajax fate,
 His ship o'erwhelm'd ; but, frowning on the floods,
 Impious he roar'd defiance to the Gods ;
 To his own prowess all the glory gave, 675
 The Power defrauding who vouchsaf'd to save.
 This heard the raging Ruler of the main ;
 His spear, indignant for such high disdain,
 He lanch'd ; dividing with his forky mace
 Th' aerial summit from the marble base ; 680

The rock rush'd sea-ward with impetuous roar
 Ingulf'd, and to th' abyfs the boaster bore.

By Juno's guardian aid, the watery vast,
 Secure of storms, your royal brother past :
 'Till coasting nigh the cape, where Malea shrouds 685
 Her spiry cliffs amid furrounding clouds ;
 A whirling gust tumultuous from the shore
 Across the deep his labouring vessel bore.
 In an ill-fated hour the coast he gain'd,
 Where late in regal pomp Thyestes reign'd ; 690
 But, when his hoary honours bow'd to Fate,
 Ægythus govern'd in paternal state.
 The furies now subside, the tempest ends ;
 From his tall ship the King of Men descends :
 'There fondly thinks the Gods conclude his toil ! 695
 Far from his own domain salutes the soil :
 With rapture oft' the verge of Greece reviews,
 And the dear turf with tears of joy bedews.
 Him thus exulting on the distant strand
 A spy distinguish'd from his airy stand, 700
 To bribe whose vigilance, Ægythus told
 A mighty sum of ill-persuading gold :
 'There watch'd this guardian of his guilty fear,
 Till the twelfth moon had wheel'd her pale career ;
 And now, admonish'd by his eye, to court 705
 With terror wing'd conveys the dread report.
 Of deathful arts expert, his lord employs
 The ministers of blood in dark surprize :
 And twenty youths in radiant mail incas'd,
 Close ambush'd nigh the spacious hall he plac'd. 710

Then

Then bids prepare the hospitable treat :
 Vain shews of love to veil his felon-hate !
 To grace the victor's welcome from the wars,
 A train of courfers and triumphal cars
 Magnificent he leads ! the royal guest, 715
 Thoughtless of ill, accepts the fraudulent feast.
 The troop, forth issuing from the dark recess,
 With homicidal rage the king oppresses !
 So, whilst he feeds luxurious in the stall,
 The sovereign of the herd is doom'd to fall. 720
 The partners of his fame and toils at Troy,
 Around their lord, a mighty ruin ! lie :
 Mix'd with the brave, the base invaders bleed ;
 Ægythus sole survives to boast the deed.
 He said ; chill horrors shook my shivering soul, 725
 Rack'd with convulsive pangs in dust I roll ;
 And hate, in madness of extreme despair,
 To view the fun, or breathe the vital air.
 But when, superior to the rage of woe,
 I stood restor'd, and tears had ceas'd to flow ; 730
 Lenient of grief, the pitying God began—
 Forget the brother, and resume the man :
 To Fate's supreme dispose the dead resign,
 That care be Fate's, a speedy passage thine.
 Still lives the wretch who wrought the death deplor'd,
 But lives a victim for thy vengeful sword ;
 Unless with filial rage Orestes glow,
 And swift prevent the meditated blow ;
 You timely will return a welcome guest,
 With him to share the sad funereal feast. 740

He said : new thoughts my beating heart employ,
 My gloomy soul receives a gleam of joy.
 Fair hope revives ; and eager I addrest
 The prescient Godhead to reveal the rest.
 The doom decreed of those disastrous two 745
 I've heard with pain, but, oh ! the tale pursue ;
 What third brave son of Mars the Fates constrain
 To roam the howling desert of the main :
 Or, in eternal shade if cold he lies,
 Provoke new sorrow from these grateful eyes. 750

That chief (rejoin'd the God) his race derives
 From Ithaca, and wondrous woes survives ;
 Laertes' son : girt with circumfluous tides, ...
 He still calamitous constraint abides.
 Him in Calypso's cave of late I view'd, 755
 When streaming grief his faded cheek bedew'd.
 But vain his prayer, his arts are vain, to move
 Th' enamour'd Goddess, or elude her love :
 His vessel sunk, and dear companions lost,
 He lives reluctant on a foreign coast. 760
 But oh, belov'd by Heaven ! reserv'd to thee
 A happier lot the smiling Fates decree :
 Free from that law, beneath whose mortal sway
 Matter is chang'd, and varying forms decay ;
 Elysium shall be thine ; the blissful plains 765
 Of utmost earth, where Rhadamanthus reigns.
 Joys ever young, unmix'd with pain or fear,
 Fill the wide circle of th' eternal year :
 Stern winter smiles on that auspicious clime ;
 The fields are florid with unfading prime ; 770

From

From the bleak pole no winds inclement blow,
Mould the round hail, or flake the fleecy snow :
But from the breezy deep the blest inhale
The fragrant murmurs of the western gale.
745 This grace peculiar will the Gods afford 775
To thee the son of Jove, and beauteous Helen's lord.

He ceas'd, and, plunging in the vast profound,
Beneath the God the whirling billows bound.
Then speeding back, involv'd in various thought,
750 My friends attending at the shore I fought. 780

Arriv'd, the rage of hunger we control,
Till night with silent shade invests the pole ;
Then lose the cares of life in pleasing rest.—
Soon as the morn reveals the roseate east,
755 With sails we wing the masts, our anchors weigh, 785
Unmoor the fleet, and rush into the sea.

Rang'd on the banks, beneath our equal oars
White curl the waves, and the vex'd ocean roars.
Then, steering backward from the Pharian Isle,
760 We gain the stream of Jove-descending Nile : 790
There quit the ships, and on the destin'd shore
With ritual hecatombs the Gods adore :

Their wrath aton'd, to Agamemnon's name
A cenotaph I raise of deathless fame.
765 These rites to piety and grief discharg'd, 795
The friendly Gods a springing gale enlarg'd :
The fleet swift tilting o'er the surges flew,
Till Grecian cliffs appear'd, a blissful view !

Thy patient ear hath heard me long relate
770 A story, fruitful of disastrous fate : 800

And now, young prince, indulge my fond request;
 Be Sparta honour'd with his royal guest,
 Till, from his eastern goal, the joyous sun
 His twelfth diurnal race begins to run.

Meantime my train the friendly gifts prepare, 805
 Three sprightly courfers, and a polish'd car:
 With these, a goblet of capacious mould,
 Figur'd with art to dignify the gold,
 (Form'd for libation to the Gods) shall prove
 A pledge and monument of sacred love. 810

My quick return, young Ithacus rejoin'd,
 Damps the warm wishes of my raptur'd mind:
 Did not my fate my needful haste constrain,
 Charm'd by your speech, so graceful and humane,
 Lost in delight the circling year would roll, 815
 While deep attention fix'd my listening soul.
 But now to Pyle permit my destin'd way,
 My lov'd associates chide my long delay:
 In dear remembrance of your royal grace,
 I take the present of the promis'd vase; 820
 The courfers, for the champaign sports, retain;
 That gift our barren rocks will render vain:
 Horrid with cliffs, our meagre land allows
 Thin herbage for the mountain goat to browse,
 But neither mead nor plain supplies, to feed 825
 The sprightly courser, or indulge his speed:
 To sea-surrounding realms the Gods assign
 Small tract of fertile lawn, the least to mine.

His hand the king with tender passion press'd,
 And, smiling, thus the royal youth address'd: 830
 O early

O early worth! a soul so wise, and young,
Proclaims you from the sage Ulysses sprung,
Selected from my stores, of matchless price
An urn shall recompence your prudent choice :
Not mean the massy mould of silver, grac'd
By Vulcan's art, the verge with gold enchas'd ;
A pledge the scepter'd power of Sidon gave,
When to his realm I plough'd the orient wave.

835

Thus they alternate ; while with artful care
The menial train the regal feast prepare :
The firstlings of the flock are doom'd to die ;
Rich fragrant wines the chearing bowl supply ;
A female band the gift of Ceres bring ;
And the gilt roofs with genial triumph ring.

840

Meanwhile, in Ithaca, the suitor-powers
In active games divide their jovial hours :
In areas vary'd with mosaic art,
Some whirl the disk, and some the javelin dart.

845

Aside, sequester'd from the vast resort,
Antinous sate spectator of the sport ;
With great Eurymachus, of worth confest,
And high descent, superior to the rest ;
Whom young Noëmon lowly thus address :

850

My ship equipp'd within the neighbouring port,
The prince, departing for the Pylian court,
Requested for his speed ; but, courteous, say
When steers he home, or why this long delay ?
For Elis I should sail with utmost speed,
T' import twelve mares which there luxurious feed,

855

And twelve young mules, a strong laborious race, 860
New to the plough, unpractis'd in the trace.

Unknowing of the course to Pyle design'd,
A sudden horror seiz'd on either mind :
The prince in rural bower they fondly thought,
Numbering his flocks and herds, not far remote. 865
Relate, Antinous cries, devoid of guile,
When spread the prince his sail for distant Pyle ?
Did chosen chiefs across the gulfy main
Attend his voyage, or domestic train ?
Spontaneous did you speed his secret course, 870
Or was the vessel seiz'd by fraud or force ?

With willing duty, not reluctant mind,
(Noëmon cry'd) the vessel was resign'd.
Who, in the balance, with the great affairs
Of courts, presume to weigh their private cares ? 875
With him, the peerage next in power to you :
And Mentor, captain of the lordly crew,
Or some celestial in his reverend form,
Safe from the secret rock and adverse storm,
Pilots the course : for when the glimmering ray 880
Of yester dawn disclos'd the tender day,
Mentor himself I saw, and much admir'd—
Then ceas'd the youth, and from the court retir'd.

Confounded and appall'd, th' unfinish'd game
The suitors quit, and all to council came. 885
Antinous first th' assembled peers address'd,
Rage sparkling in his eyes, and burning in his breast :

O shame to manhood ! shall one daring boy
The scheme of all our happiness destroy ?

Fly,

60 Fly unperceiv'd, seducing half the flower
Of nobles, and invite a foreign power ? 890

The ponderous engine rais'd to crush us all,
Recoiling, on his head is sure to fall.

65 Instant prepare me, on the neighbouring strand,
With twenty chosen mates a vessel mann'd ; 895

For ambush'd close beneath the Samian shore
His ship returning shall my spies explore :
He soon his rashness shall with life atone,
Seek for his father's fate, but find his own.

70 With vast applause the sentence all approve ; 900
Then rise, and to the feastful hall remove ;

Swift to the queen the herald Medon ran,
Who heard the consult of the dire divan :

75 Before her dome the royal matron stands,
And thus the message of his haste demands ; 905

What will the suitors ? must my servant-train
Th' allotted labours of the day refrain,

For them to form some exquisite repast ?
Heaven grant this festival may prove their last !

80 Or, if t'ey still must live, from me remove 910
The double plague of luxury and love !

Forbear, ye sons of Insolence ! forbear,
In riot to consume a wretched heir.

85 In the young soul illustrious thought to raise,
Were ye not tutor'd with Ulysses' praise ? 915

Have not your fathers oft my lord defin'd,
Gentle of speech, beneficent of mind ?

Some kings with arbitrary rage devour,
Or in their tyrant-minions vest the power :

Ulysses

Ulysses let no partial favours fall, 920
 The people's parent, he protected all :
 But absent now, perfidious and ingrate !
 His stores ye ravage, and usurp his state.

He thus : O were the woes you speak the worst !
 They form a deed more odious and accurst ; 925
 More dreadful than your boding soul divines :
 But pitying Jove avert the dire designs !
 The darling object of your royal care
 Is mark'd to perish in a deathful snare ;
 Before he anchors in his native port, 930
 From Pyle re-sailing and the Spartan court ;
 Horrid to speak ! in ambush is decreed
 The hope and heir of Ithaca to bleed !

Sudden she sunk beneath the weighty woes,
 The vital streams a chilling horror froze : 935
 The big round tear stands trembling in her eye,
 And on her tongue imperfect accents dye.
 At length, in tender language, interwove
 With sighs, she thus express'd her anxious love :
 Why rashly would my son his fate explore, 940
 Ride the wild waves, and quit the safer shore ?
 Did he, with all the greatly wretched, crave
 A blank oblivion, and untimely grave ?

'Tis not, reply'd the sage, to Medon given
 To know, if some inhabitant of Heaven 945
 In his young breast the daring thought inspir'd ;
 Or if, alone with filial duty fir'd,
 The winds and waves he tempts in early bloom,
 Studious to learn his absent father's doom.

The

The sage retir'd : unable to control
 The mighty griefs that swell her labouring soul,
 Rolling convulsive on the floor, is seen
 The piteous object of a prostrate queen.
 Words to her dumb complaint a pause supplies,
 And breath, to waste in unavailing cries. 955
 Around their sovereign wept the menial fair,
 To whom she thus address'd her deep despair :
 Behold a wretch whom all the Gods consign
 To woe ! Did ever sorrows equal mine ?
 Lest to my joys my dearest lord is lost, 960
 His country's buckler, and the Grecian boast :
 Now from my fond embrace, by tempests torn,
 Our other column of the state is borne :
 Nor took a kind adieu, nor sought consent !—
 Unkind confederates in his dire intent ! 965
 Ill suits it with your shews of duteous zeal,
 From me the purpos'd voyage to conceal :
 Though at the solemn midnight hour he rose,
 Why did you fear to trouble my repose ?
 He either had obey'd my fond desire, 970
 Or seen his mother, pierc'd with grief, expire.
 Bid Dolius quick attend, the faithful slave
 Whom to my nuptial train Icarius gave,
 To tend the fruit-groves : with incessant speed
 He shall this violence of death decreed 975
 To good Laertes tell. Experienc'd age
 May timely intercept the ruffian-rage.
 Convene the tribes, the murderous plot reveal,
 And to their power to save his race appeal,

Then Euryclea thus : My dearest dread ! 980
 Though to the sword I bow this hoary head,
 Or if a dungeon be the pain decreed,
 I own me conscious of th' unpleasing deed :
 Auxiliar to his flight, my aid implor'd,
 With wine and viands I the vessel stor'd : 985
 A solemn oath, impos'd, the secret seal'd,
 Till the twelfth dawn the light of heaven reveal'd.
 Dreading th' effect of a fond mother's fear,
 He dar'd not violate your royal ear.
 But bathe, and, in imperial robes array'd, 990
 Pay due devotions to the * martial Maid,
 And rest affianc'd in her guardian aid. }
 Send not to good Laertes, nor engage
 In toils of state the miseries of age :
 'Tis impious to surmise, the Powers divine 995
 To ruin doom the Jove-descended line :
 Long shall the race of just Arcegius reign,
 And illes remote enlarge his old domain.

The queen her speech with calm attention hears,
 Her eyes restrain the silver-streaming tears : 1000
 She bathes, and, rob'd, the sacred doom ascends :
 Her pious speed a female train attends :
 The salted cakes in canisters are laid,
 And thus the queen invokes Minerva's aid :

Daughter divine of Jove, whose arm can wield 1005
 Th' avenging bolt, and shake the dreaded shield !
 If e'er Ulysses to thy fane preferr'd
 The best and choicest of his flock and herd ;

* Minerva.

Hear,

Hear, Goddess, hear, by those oblations won;
 And for the pious fire preserve the son : 1010
 His wish'd return with happy power befriend,
 And on the suitors let thy wrath descend.

She ceas'd ; shrill extasies of joy declare
 The favouring Goddess present to the prayer :
 The suitors heard, and deem'd the mirthful voice
 A signal of her hymenæal choice :
 Whilst one most jovial thus accosts the board ;
 " Too late the queen selects a second lord :
 " In evil hour the nuptial rite intends,
 " When o'er her son disastrous death impends." 1020
 Thus he, unskill'd of what the Fates provide !
 But with severe rebuke Antinous cry'd :

These empty vaunts will make the voyage vain ;
 Alarm not with discourse the menial train :
 The great event with silent hope attend ; 1025
 Our deeds alone our counsel must commend.
 His speech thus ended short, he frowning rose,
 And twenty chiefs renown'd for valour chose :
 Down to the strand he speeds with haughty strides,
 Where anchor'd in the bay the vessel rides, 1030
 Replete with mail and military store,
 In all her tackle trim to quit the shore.
 The desperate crew ascend, unfurl the sails
 (The sea-ward prow invites the tardy gales) ;
 'Then take repast, till Hesperus display'd 1035
 His golden circlet in the western shade.

Meantime the queen, without reflection due,
 Heart-wounded, to the bed of state withdrew :

In her sad breast the prince's fortunes roll,
 And hope and doubt alternate seize her soul. 1040
 So when the woodman's toil her cave surrounds,
 And with the hunter's cry the grove resounds;
 With grief and rage the mother-lion stung,
 Fearless herself, yet trembles for her young.

While pensive in the silent slumberous shade, 1045
 Sleep's gentle powers her drooping eyes invade;
 Minerva, life-like, on imbodied air
 Impress'd the form of Iphthima the fair
 (Icarus' daughter she, whose blooming charms
 Allur'd Eumelus to her virgin-arms; 1050
 A scepter'd lord, who o'er the fruitful plain
 Of Thessaly, wide stretch'd his ample reign):
 As Pallas will'd, along the fable skies,
 To calm the queen, the phantom-sister flies.
 Swift on the regal dome descending right, 1055
 The bolted valves are pervious to her flight.
 Close to her head the pleasing vision stands,
 And thus performs Minerva's high commands.

O why, Penelope, this causeless fear,
 To render sleep's soft blessing unsincere? 1060
 Alike devote to sorrow's dire extreme
 The day-reflection, and the midnight dream!
 Thy son the Gods propitious will restore,
 And bid thee cease his absence to deplore.

To whom the queen (whilst yet her pensive mind
 Was in the silent gates of sleep confin'd)
 O sister, to my soul for ever dear,
 Who this first visit to reprove my fear?

How

How in a realm so distant should you know
 From what deep source my deathless sorrows flow?
 To all my hope my royal lord is lost,
 His country's buckler, and the Grecian boast:
 And, with consummate woe to weigh me down,
 The heir of all his honours and his crown,
 My darling son is fled! an easy prey 1075
 To the fierce storms, or men more fierce than they:
 Who, in a league of blood associates sworn,
 Will intercept th' unwary youth's return.

Courage resume, the shadowy form reply'd,
 In the protecting care of heaven confide: 1080
 On him attends the blue-ey'd martial Maid;
 What earthly can implore a surer aid?
 Me now the guardian Goddess deigns to send,
 To bid thee patient his return attend.

The queen replies: If in the blest abodes 1085
 A Goddess, thou hast commerce with the Gods;
 Say, breathes my lord the blissful realm of light,
 Or lies he wrapt in ever-during night?

Enquire not of his doom, the phantom cries,
 I speak not all the counsel of the skies: 1090
 Nor must indulge with vain discourse, or long,
 The windy satisfaction of the tongue.

Swift through the valves the visionary fair
 Repas'd, and viewless mix'd with common air.
 The queen awakes, deliver'd of her woes: 1095
 With florid joy her heart dilating glows:
 The vision, manifest of future fate,
 Makes her with hope her son's arrival wait.

Mean-

Mean-time the suitors plough the watery plain,
Telemachus in thought already slain! 1100
When sight of lessening Ithaca was lost,
Their sail directed for the Samian coast,
A small but verdant isle appear'd in view,
And Asteris th' advancing pilot knew :
An ample port the rocks projected form, 1105
To break the rolling waves, and ruffling storm :
That safe recess they gain with happy speed,
And in close ambush wait the murderous deed.

THE
FIFTH BOOK
OF THE
ODYSSEY.

Vol. L.

L

A R G U M E N T.

The Departure of Ulysses from Calypso.

PALLAS in a council of the Gods complains of the detention of Ulysses in the island of Calypso; whereupon Mercury is sent to command his removal. The feat of Calypso described. She consents with much difficulty; and Ulysses builds a vessel with his own hands, on which he embarks. Neptune overtakes him with a terrible tempest, in which he is shipwrecked, and in the last danger of death: till Leucothea, a Sea Goddeß, assists him, and, after innumerable perils, he gets ashore on Phæacia.

T H E
O D Y S S E Y.
B O O K V.

THE saffron morn, with early blushes spread,
 Now rose refulgent from Tithonus' bed ;
 With new-born day to gladden mortal sight,
 And gild the courts of Heaven with sacred light.
 Then met th' eternal synod of the sky,
 Before the God who thunders from on high,
 Supreme in might, sublime in majesty. }
 Pallas, to these, deplores th' unequal fates
 Of wise Ulysses, and his toils relates :
 Her hero's danger touch'd the pitying Power, 10
 The nymph's seducements, and the magic bower.
 Thus she began her plaint : Immortal Jove !
 And you who fill the blisful seats above !
 Let kings no more with gentle mercy sway,
 Or blest a people willing to obey, 15
 But crush the nations with an iron rod,
 And every monarch be the scourge of God :
 If from your thoughts Ulysses you remove,
 Who rul'd his subjects with a father's love.
 Sole in an isle, encircled by the main, 20
 Abandon'd, banish'd from his native reign,
 Unblest he sighs, detain'd by lawless charms,
 And press'd unwilling in Calypso's arms.

Nor friends are there, nor vessels to convey,
 Nor oars to cut th' immeasurable way. 25
 And now fierce traitors, studious to destroy
 His only son, their ambush'd fraud employ;
 Who, pious, following his great father's fame,
 To sacred Pylos and to Sparta came.

What words are these, (reply'd the Power who forms
 The clouds of night, and darkens Heaven with storms)
 Is not already in thy soul decreed,
 The chief's return shall make the guilty bleed?
 What cannot wisdom do? Thou may'st restore
 The son in safety to his native shore; 35
 While the fell foes, who late in ambush lay,
 With fraud defeated, measure back their way.

Then thus to Hermes the command was given:
 Hermes, thou chosen messenger of heaven!
 Go, to the nymph be these our orders borne: 40
 'Tis Jove's decree, Ulysses shall return:
 The patient man shall view his old abodes,
 Nor help'd by mortal hand, nor guiding Gods:
 In twice ten days shall fertile Sheria find,
 Alone, and floating to the wave and wind. 45
 The bold Phæacians there, whose haughty line
 Is mix'd with Gods, half human, half divine,
 The chief shall honour as some heavenly guest,
 And swift transport him to his place of rest.
 His vessels loaded with a plenteous store 50
 Of brass, of vestures, and resplendent ore
 (A richer prize than if his joyful isle
 Receiv'd him charg'd with Ilion's noble spoil).

His

His friends, his country, he shall see, though late;
Such is our sovereign will, and such is fate. 55

He spoke. The God who mounts the winged winds
Fast to his feet the golden pinions binds,
That high through fields of air his flight sustain
O'er the wide earth, and o'er the boundless main.

He grasps the wand that causes sleep to fly, 60
Or in soft slumber seals the wakeful eye:

Then shoots from heaven to high Pieria's steep,
And stoops incumbent on the rolling deep.
So watery fowl, that seek their fishy food,
With wings expanded o'er the foaming flood, 65
Now sailing smooth the level surface sweep,
Now dip their pinions in the briny deep.

Thus o'er the world of waters Hermes flew,
Till now the distant island rose in view:
Then, swift ascending from the azure wave, 70
He took the path that winded to the cave.

Large was the grot, in which the nymph he found
(The fair-hair'd nymph with every beauty crown'd);
She fate, and sung: the rocks resound her lays;
The cave was brighten'd with a rising blaze: 75

Cedar and frankincense, an odorous pile,
Flam'd on the hearth, and wide perfum'd the isle;
While she with work and song the time divides,
And through the loom the golden shuttle guides.
Without the grot a various sylvan scene 80

Appear'd around, and groves of living green;
Poplars and alders ever quivering play'd,
And nodding cypress form'd a fragrant shade;

On whose high branches, waving with the storm,
 The birds of broadest wing their mansion form, 85
 The chough, the sea-mew, the loquacious crow,
 And scream aloft, and skim the deeps below.
 Depending vines the shelving cavern screen,
 With purple clusters blushing through the green.
 Four limpid fountains from the clefts distil;
 And every fountain pours a several rill,
 In mazy windings wandering down the hill: }
 Where bloomy meads with vivid greens were crown'd,
 And glowing violets threw odours round.

A scene, where if a God should cast his sight, 95
 A God might gaze, and wander with delight!
 Joy touch'd the messenger of heaven: he stay'd
 Entranc'd, and all the blissful haunt survey'd.
 Him, entering in the cave, Calypso knew;
 For Powers celestial to each other's view 100
 Stand still confest, though distant far they lie
 To habitants of earth, or sea, or sky.
 But sad Ulysses, by himself apart,
 Pour'd the big sorrows of his swelling heart;
 All on the lonely shore he sate to weep, 105
 And roll'd his eyes around the restless deep;
 Tow'rd his lov'd coast he roll'd his eyes in vain,
 Till, dimm'd with rising grief, they stream'd again.

Now graceful seated on her shining throne,
 To Hermes thus the nymph divine begun: 110
 God of the golden wand! on what behest
 Arriv'st thou here, an unexpected guest?
 Lov'd as thou art, thy free injunctions lay;
 'Tis mine, with joy and duty to obey.

Till

Till now a stranger, in a happy hour
Approach, and taste the dainties of my bower. 115

Thus having spoke, the nymph the table spread
(Ambrosial cates, with nectar rosy-red);
Hermes the hospitable rite partook,
Divine refection! then, recruited, spoke: 120

What mov'd this journey from my native sky,
A Goddess asks, nor can a God deny:
Hear then the truth. By mighty Jove's command,
Unwilling, have I trod this pleasing land;
For who, self-mov'd, with weary wing would sweep 125
Such length of ocean and unmeasur'd deep:

A world of waters! far from all the ways
Where men frequent, or sacred altars blaze?
But to Jove's will submission we must pay;
What power so great, to dare to disobey? 130

A man, he says, a man resides with thee,
Of all his kind most worn with misery:

The Greeks (whose arms for nine long years employ'd
Their force in Llion, in the tenth destroy'd)

At length embarking in a luckless hour, 135

With conquest proud, incens'd Minerva's power:

Hence on the guilty race her vengeance hurl'd,

With storms pursued them through the liquid world.

There all his vessels sunk beneath the wave!

There all his dear companions found their grave! 140

Sav'd from the jaws of death by Heaven's decree,

The tempest drove him to these shores and thee.

Him, Jove now orders to his native lands

Straight to dismiss; so destiny commands:

Impatient fate his near return attends,
And calls him to his country and his friends.

145

Ev'n to her inmost soul the Goddeſs ſhook;
Then thus her anguiſh and her paſſion broke:
Ungracious Gods! with ſpite and envy curſt!
Still to your own æthereal race the worſt!

150

Ye envy mortal and immortal joy,
And love, the only ſweet of life, deſtroy.
Did ever Goddeſs by her charms engage
A favour'd mortal, and not feel your rage?
So when Aurora fought Orion's love,
Her joys diſturb'd your bliſſful hours above,
Till, in Ortygia, Dian's winged dart
Had pierc'd the hapleſs hunter to the heart.

155

So when the covert of the thrice-ear'd field
Saw ſtately Ceres to her paſſion yield,
Scarce could Iäſion taſte her heavenly charms,
But Jove's ſwift lightning ſcorch'd him in her arms.

160

And is it now my turn, ye mighty powers!
Am I the envy of your bliſſful bowers?

A man, an outcaſt to the ſtorm and wave,
It was my crime to pity, and to ſave;

165

When he who thunders rent his bark in twain,
And ſunk his brave companions in the main.
Alone, abandon'd, in mid ocean toſt,

*The ſport of winds, and driven from every coaſt, 170
Hither this man of miſeries I led,

Receiv'd the friendleſs, and the hungry fed;

Nay promis'd (vainly promis'd) to beſtow

Immortal life, exempt from age and woe.

*Tis

'Tis past—and Jove decrees he shall remove ; 175
 Gods as we are, we are but slaves to Jove.
 Go then he may (he must, if He ordain,
 Try all those dangers, all those deeps, again) :
 But never, never shall Calypso send
 To toils like these, her husband and her friend. 180
 What ships have I, what sailors to convey,
 What oars to cut the long laborious way ?
 Yet, I'll direct the safest means to go :
 That last advice is all I can bestow.

To her, the Power who bears the charming rod : 185
 Dismiss the Man, nor irritate the God ;
 Prevent the rage of him who reigns above,
 For what so dreadful as the wrath of Jove ?
 Thus having said, he cut the cleaving sky,
 And in a moment vanish'd from her eye. 190

The nymph, obedient to divine command,
 To seek Ulysses, pac'd along the sand.
 Him pensive on the lonely beach she found,
 With streaming eyes in briny torrents drown'd,
 And inly pining for his native shore : 195

For now the soft enchantress pleas'd no more :
 For now, reluctant, and constrain'd by charms,
 Absent he lay in her desiring arms,
 In slumber wore the heavy night away,
 On rocks and shores consum'd the tedious day ; 200
 There fate all desolate, and sigh'd alone,
 With echoing sorrows made the mountains groan,
 And roll'd his eyes o'er all the restless main,
 Till, dimm'd with rising grief, they stream'd again.

Here,

Here, on his musing mood the Goddess prest, 205
 Approaching soft ; and thus the chief address :
 Unhappy man ! to wasting woes a prey,
 No more in sorrows languish life away :
 Free as the winds I give thee now to rove—
 Go, fell the timber of yon lofty grove, 210
 And form a raft, and build the rising ship,
 Sublime to bear thee o'er the gloomy deep.
 To store the vessel, let the care be mine,
 With water from the rock, and rosy wine,
 And life-sustaining bread, and fair array, 215
 And prosperous gales to waft thee on the way.
 'These, if the Gods with my desires comply,
 (The Gods, alas ! more mighty far than I,
 And better skill'd in dark events to come)
 In peace shall land thee at thy native home. 220

With sighs, Ulysses heard the words she spoke,
 Then thus his melancholy silence broke :
 Some other motive, Goddess ! sways thy mind,
 (Some close design, or turn of womankind)
 Nor my return the end, nor this the way, 225
 On a slight raft to pass the swelling sea,
 Huge, horrid, vast ! where scarce in safety sails
 The best-built ship, though Jove inspire the gales.
 The bold proposal how shall I fulfil ;
 Dark as I am, unconscious of thy will ? 230
 Swear then thou mean'st not what my soul forebodes ;
 Swear by the solemn oath that binds the Gods.

Him, while he spoke, with smiles Calypso ey'd,
 And gently grasp'd his hand, and thus reply'd :

This

This shows thee, friend, by old experience taught, 235
 And learn'd in all the wiles of human thought,
 How prone to doubt, how cautious are the wise?
 But hear, O earth! and hear ye sacred skies!
 And thou, O Styx! whose formidable floods
 Glide through the shades, and bind th' attesting Gods!
 No form'd design, no meditated end,
 Lurks in the counsel of thy faithful friend;
 Kind the persuasion, and sincere my aim;
 The same my practice, were my fate the same.
 Heaven has not curst me with a heart of steel, 245
 But given the sense, to pity, and to feel.

Thus having said, the Goddess march'd before:
 He trod her footsteps in the sandy shore.
 At the cool cave arriv'd, they took their state;
 He fill'd the throne where Mercury had sat, 250
 For him, the nymph a rich repast ordains,
 Such as the mortal life of man sustains;
 Before herself were plac'd the cakes divine,
 Ambrosial banquet, and celestial wine.
 Their hunger satiate, and their thirst repress, 255
 Thus spoke Calypso to her god-like guest:

Ulysses! (with a sigh she thus began)
 O sprung from Gods! in Wisdom more than man;
 Is then thy home the passion of thy heart?
 Thus wilt thou leave me, are we thus to part? 260
 Farewell! and ever joyful may'st thou be,
 Nor break the transport with one thought of me.
 But ah, Ulysses! wert thou given to know
 What Fate yet dooms thee, yet, to undergo;

Thy

Thy heart might settle in this scene of ease, 265
 And ev'n these slighted charms might learn to please,
 A willing Goddess and immortal life
 Might banish from thy mind an absent wife.
 Am I inferior to a mortal dame?

Less soft my feature, less august my frame? 270
 Or shall the daughters of mankind compare
 Their earth-born beauties with the heavenly fair?

Alas! for this (the prudent man replies)
 Against Ulysses shall thy anger rise?
 Lov'd and ador'd, oh Goddess! as thou art, 275
 Forgive the weakness of a human heart.

Though well I see thy graces far above
 The dear, though mortal, object of my love,
 Of youth eternal well the difference know,
 And the short date of fading charms below; 280
 Yet every day, while absent thus I roam,
 I languish to return and die at home.

Whate'er the Gods shall destine me to bear
 In the black ocean, or the watery war,
 'Tis mine to master with a constant mind; 285
 Enur'd to perils, to the worst resign'd.
 By seas, by wars, so many dangers run;
 Still I can suffer: their high will be done!

Thus while he spoke, the beamy sun descends,
 And rising night her friendly shade extends. 290
 To the close grot the lonely pair remove,
 And slept delighted with the gifts of love.
 When rosy morning call'd them from their rest,
 Ulysses rob'd him in the cloak and vest.

The nymph's fair head a veil transparent grac'd, 295
Her swelling loins a radiant zone embrac'd
With flowers of gold: an under robe, unbound,
In snowy waves flow'd glittering on the ground.
Forth issuing thus, she gave him first to wield
A weighty ax with truest temper steel'd, 300

And double edg'd; the handle smooth and plain,
Wrought of the clouded olive's easy grain;
And next, a wedge to drive with sweepy sway:
Then to the neighbouring forest led the way.
On the lone island's utmost verge there stood 305
Of poplars, pines, and firs, a lofty wood,
Whose leafless summits to the skies aspire,
Scorch'd by the sun, or fear'd by heavenly fire
(Already dry'd). These pointing out to view,
The nymph just shew'd him, and with tears withdrew.

Now toils the hero; trees on trees o'erthrown
Fall crackling round him, and the forest groan:
Sudden, full twenty on the plain are strow'd,
And lopp'd, and lighten'd of their branchy load.
At equal angles these dispos'd to join, 315
He smooth'd and squar'd them, by the rule and line.
(The wimbles for the work Calypso found)
With those he pierc'd them, and with clinchers bound.

Long and capacious as a shipwright forms
Some bark's broad bottom to out-ride the storms, 320
So large he built the raft: then ribb'd it strong
From space to space, and nail'd the planks along;
These form'd the sides: the deck he fashion'd last;
Then o'er the vessel rais'd the taper mast,

With

With crossing sail-yards dancing in the wind ; 325
 And to the helm the guiding rudder join'd
 (With yielding osiers fenc'd, to break the force
 Of surging waves, and steer the steady course).
 Thy loom, Calypso ! for the future sails
 Supply'd the cloth, capacious of the gales. 330
 With stays and cordage last he rigg'd the ship,
 And, roll'd on levers, launch'd her in the deep.

Four days were past, and now the work complete,
 Shone the fifth morn : when from her sacred seat
 The nymph dismiss him, (odorous garments given)
 And bath'd in fragrant oils that breath'd of Heaven :
 Then fill'd two goat-skins with her hands divine,
 With water one, and one with fable wine :
 Of every kind, provisions heav'd aboard ;
 And the full decks with copious viands stor'd. 340
 The Goddess, last, a gentle breeze supplies,
 To curl old ocean, and to warm the skies.

And now, rejoicing in the prosperous gales,
 With beating heart, Ulysses spreads his sails ;
 Plac'd at the helm he fate, and mark'd the skies, 345
 Nor clos'd in sleep his ever-watchful eyes.
 There view'd the Pleiads, and the Northern Team,
 And great Orion's more refulgent beam,
 To which, around the axle of the sky
 The Bear, revolving, points his golden eye : 350
 Who shines exalted on th' æthereal plain,
 Nor bathes his blazing forehead in the main.
 Far on the left those radiant fires to keep
 The nymph directed, as he sail'd the deep.

Full seventeen nights he cut the foamy way :
The distant land appear'd the following day :
Then swell'd to sight Phæacia's dusky coast,
And woody mountains, half in vapours lost :
That lay before him, indistinct and vast,
Like a broad shield amid the watery waste. 355 360

But him, thus voyaging the deeps below,
From far, on Solyme's ærial brow,
The King of Ocean saw, and seeing burn'd
(From Æthiopia's happy climes return'd) ;
The raging monarch shook his azure head, 365
And thus in secret to his soul he said :

Heavens ! how uncertain are the Powers on high ?
Is then revers'd the sentence of the sky,
In one man's favour ; while a distant guest
I shar'd secure the Æthiopian feast ? 370

Behold how near Phæacia's land he draws !
The land, affix'd by Fate's eternal laws
To end his toils. Is then our anger vain ?
No ; if this sceptre yet commands the main.

He spoke, and high the forked trident hurl'd 375
Rolls clouds on clouds, and stirs the watery world,
At once the face of earth and sea deforms,
Swells all the winds, and rouses all the storms.
Down rush'd the night : east, west, together roar ;
And south, and north, roll mountains to the shore ;
Then shook the hero, to despair resign'd,
And question'd thus his yet unconquer'd mind :

Wretch that I am ! what farther fates attend
This life of toils, and what my destin'd end ?

Too well, alas! the Island Goddess knew, 385
 On the black sea what perils should ensue.
 New horrors now this destin'd head enclose;
 Unfill'd is yet the measure of my woes;
 With what a cloud the brows of Heaven are crown'd!
 What raging winds! what roaring waters round! 390
 'Tis Jove himself the swelling tempests rears;
 Death, present death, on every side appears.
 Happy! thrice happy! who, in battle slain,
 Prest, in Atrides' cause, the Trojan plain:
 Oh! had I dy'd before that well-fought wall; 395
 Had some distinguish'd day renown'd my fall
 (Such as was that, when showers of javelins fled
 From conquering Troy around Achilles dead);
 All Greece had paid me solemn funerals then,
 And spread my glory with the sons of men. 400
 A shameful fate now hides my hapless head,
 Un-wept, un-noted, and for ever dead!

A mighty wave rush'd o'er him as he spoke,
 The raft it cover'd, and the mast it broke;
 Swept from the deck, and from the rudder torn, 405
 Far on the swelling surge the chief was borne:
 While by the howling tempest rent in twain
 Flew sail and sail-yards rattling o'er the main.
 Long press'd, he heav'd beneath the weighty wave,
 Clogg'd by the cumbrous vest Calypso gave: 410
 At length, emerging from his nostrils wide
 And gushing mouth, effus'd the briny tide,
 Ev'n then not mindless of his last retreat,
 He seiz'd the raft, and leapt into his seat,

Strong

Strong with the fear of death. The rolling flood
 Now here, now there, impell'd the floating wood.
 As when a heap of gather'd thorns is cast
 Now to, now fro, before th' autumnal blast;
 Together clung, it rolls around the field; 420
 So roll'd the float, and so its texture held:
 And now the south, and now the north, bear sway,
 And now the east the foamy floods obey,
 And now the west-wind whirls it o'er the sea. }
 The wandering chief, with toils on toils oppress'd,
 Leucothea saw, and pity touch'd her breast 425
 (Herself a mortal once, of Cadmus' strain,
 But now an azure sister of the main).
 Swift as a sea-mew springing from the flood,
 All radiant on the raft the Goddess stood:
 Then thus address'd him: Thou, whom Heaven decrees
 To Neptune's wrath, stern tyrant of the seas,
 (Unequal contest! not his rage and power,
 Great as he is, such virtue shall devour.
 What I suggest, thy wisdom will perform;
 Forake thy float, and leave it to the storm; 435
 Strip off thy garments; Neptune's fury brave
 With naked strength, and plunge into the wave.
 To reach Phæacia all thy nerves extend,
 There Fate decrees thy miseries shall end.
 This heavenly scarf beneath thy bosom bind, 440
 And live; give all thy terrors to the wind.
 Soon as thy arms the happy shore shall gain,
 Return the gift, and cast it in the main;
 Observe my orders, and with heed obey,
 Cast it far off, and turn thy eyes away. 445

VOL. L.

M

With

With that, her hand the sacred veil bestows,
 Then down the deeps she div'd from whence she rose;
 A moment snatch'd the shining form away,
 And all was cover'd with the curling sea.
 Struck with amaze, yet still to doubt inclin'd, 450
 He stands suspended, and explores his mind.
 What shall I do? Unhappy me! who knows
 But other Gods intend me other woes?
 Whoe'er thou art, I shall not blindly join
 Thy pleaded reason, but consult with mine: 455
 For scarce in ken appears that distant isle.
 Thy voice foretels me shall conclude my toil.
 Thus then I judge; while yet the planks sustain
 The wild waves fury, here I fix'd remain:
 But when their texture to the tempests yields, 460
 I launch adventurous on the liquid fields,
 Join to the help of Gods the strength of man,
 And take this method, since the best I can.

While thus his thoughts an anxious council hold,
 The raging God a watery mountain roll'd; 465
 Like a black sheet the whelming billow spread
 Bursts o'er the float, and thunder'd on his head.
 Planks, beams, disparted fly: the scatter'd wood
 Rolls diverse, and in fragments strows the flood.
 So the rude Boreas, o'er the fields new-shorn, 470
 Tosses and drives the scatter'd heaps of corn.
 And now a single beam the chief bestrides;
 There pois'd a while above the bounding tides,
 His limbs discumbers of the clinging vest,
 And binds the sacred cincture round his breast: 475
 Then

Then prone on ocean in a moment flung,
Stretch'd wide his eager arms, and shot the seas along.
All naked now, on heaving billows laid,
Stern Neptune ey'd him, and contemptuous said:

Go, learn'd in woes, and other woes essay! 480

Go, wander helpless on the watery way:

Thus, thus find out the destin'd shore, and then

(If Jove ordains it) mix with happier men.

Whate'er thy fate, the ills our wrath could raise

Shall last remember'd in thy best of days. 485

This said, his sea-green steeds divide the foam,

And reach high Ægæ and the towery dome.

Now, scarce withdrawn the fierce earth-shaking power,

Jove's daughter, Pallas, watch'd the favouring hour,

Back to their caves she bade the winds to fly, 490

And hush'd the blustering brethren of the sky.

The drier blasts alone of Boreas sway,

And bear him soft on broken waves away;

With gentle force impelling to that shore,

Where Fate has destin'd he shall toil no more. 495

And now two nights, and now two days were past,

Since wide he wander'd on the watery waste:

Heav'd on the surge with intermitting breath,

And hourly panting in the arms of death.

The third fair morn now blaz'd upon the main; 500

Then glassy smooth lay all the liquid plain;

The winds were hush'd, the billows scarcely curl'd,

And a dead silence still'd the watery world;

When lifted on a ridgy wave he 'spies

The land at distance, and with sharpen'd eyes. 505

As pious children joy with vast delight
 When a lov'd fire revives before their sight
 (Who, lingering long has call'd on death in vain,
 Fix'd by some dæmon to his bed of pain,
 Till Heaven by miracle his life restore);

510

So joys Ulysses at th' appearing shore,
 And fees, (and labours onward as he fees)
 The rising forests and the tufted trees.

And now, as near approaching as the sound
 Of human voice the listening ear may wound,
 Amidst the rocks he hears a hollow roar
 Of murmuring surges breaking on the shore:
 Nor peaceful port was there, nor winding bay,
 To shield the vessel from the rolling sea,

515

But cliffs, and shaggy shores, a dreadful fight!
 All-rough with rocks, with foaming billows white.
 Fear seiz'd his slacken'd limbs and beating heart;
 As thus commun'd he with his soul apart:

520

Ah me! when, o'er a length of waters tost,
 These eyes at last behold th' unhop'd-for coast,
 No port receives me from the angry main,
 But the loud deeps demand me back again.
 Above, sharp rocks forbid access; around,
 Roar the wild waves; beneath is sea profound!
 No footing sure affords the faithless sand,
 To stem too rapid, and too deep to stand.

525

530

If here I enter, my efforts are in vain,
 Dash'd on the cliffs, or heav'd into the main;
 Or round the island if my course I bend,
 Where the ports open, or the shores descend,

535

Back

Back to the seas the rolling surge may sweep,
And bury all my hopes beneath the deep.
Or some enormous whale the God may send,
(For many such on Amphitrite attend)
Too well the turns of mortal chance I know, 540
And hate relentless of my heavenly foe.

While thus he thought, a monstrous wave upbore
The chief, and dash'd him on the craggy shore:
Torn was his skin, nor had the ribs been whole,
But instant Pallas enter'd in his soul. 545

Close to the cliff with both his hands he clung,
And stuck adherent, and suspended hung;
Till the huge surge roll'd off: then, backward sweep
The reflux tides, and plunge him in the deep.
As when the Polypus, from forth his cave 550

Torn with full force, reluctant beats the wave;
His ragged claws are stuck with stones and sands:
So the rough rock had shagg'd Ulysses hands.
And now had perish'd, whelm'd beneath the main,
Th' unhappy man: ev'n Fate had been in vain: 555

But all-subduing Pallas lent her power,
And prudence sav'd him in the needful hour.
Beyond the beating surge his course he bore,
(A wider circle, but in sight of shore)
With longing eyes, observing, to survey 560

Some smooth ascent, or safe-sequester'd bay.
Between the parting rocks at length he 'spy'd
A falling stream with gentler waters glide;
Where to the seas the shelving shore declin'd,
And form'd a bay impervious to the wind. 565

To

To this calm port the glad Ulysses prest,
And hail'd the river, and its God address:

Who'er thou art, before whose stream unknown
I bend, a suppliant at thy watery throne,
Hear, azure king! nor let me fly in vain 570
To thee from Neptune and the raging main.
Heaven hears and pities hapless men like me,
For sacred ev'n to Gods is misery:
Let then thy waters give the weary rest,
And save a suppliant, and a man distressed. 575

He pray'd, and straight the gentle stream subsides,
Detains the rushing current of his tides,
Before the wanderer smooths the watery way,
And soft receives him from the rolling sea.
That moment, fainting as he touch'd the shore, 580
He dropt his sinewy arms: his knees no more
Perform'd their office, or his weight upheld:
His swain heart heav'd; his bloated body swell'd:
From mouth and nose the briny torrent ran;
And lost in lassitude lay all the man, 585
Depriv'd of voice, of motion, and of breath;
The soul scarce waking in the arms of death.
Soon as warm life its wonted office found,
The mindful chief Leucothea's scarf unbound;
Observant of her word, he turn'd aside 590
His head, and cast it on the rolling tide.
Behind him far, upon the purple waves
The waters waft it, and the nymph receives.

Now parting from the stream, Ulysses found
A mossy bank, with pliant rushes crown'd!
The bank he press'd, and gently kiss'd the ground;

Where

Where on the flowery herb as soft he lay,
Thus to his soul the fage began to say :

What will ye next ordain, ye Powers on high?

And yet, ah! yet, what Fates are we to try?

600

Here by the stream, if I the night out-wear,

Thus spent already, how shall nature bear

The dews descending, and nocturnal air;

Or chilly vapours, breathing from the flood

When morning rises?—If I take the wood,

605

And in thick shelter of innumerable boughs

Enjoy the comfort gently sleep allows;

Though fenc'd from cold, and though my toil be past,

What savage beasts may wander in the waste;

Perhaps I yet may fall a bloody prey

610

To prowling bears, or lions in the way.

Thus long debating in himself he stood :

At length he took the passage to the wood,

Whose shady horrors on a rising brow

Wav'd high, and frown'd upon the stream below.

615

There grew two olives, closest of the grove,

With roots intwin'd, and branches interwove;

Alike their leaves, but not alike they smil'd

With sister fruits; one fertile, one was wild.

Nor here the sun's meridian rays had power,

620

Nor wind sharp-piercing, nor the rushing shower;

The verdant arch so close its texture kept :

Beneath this covert great Ulysses crept.

Of gather'd leaves an ample bed he made

(Thick strown by tempest through the bowery shade);

Where three at least might winter's cold defy,

Though Borcas rag'd along th' inclement sky.

This store, with joy the patient hero found,
And, sunk amidst them, heap'd the leaves around.
As some poor peasant, fated to reside
Remote from neighbours in a forest wide,
Studious to save what human wants require,
In embers heap'd, preserves the seeds of fire:
Hid in dry foliage thus Ulysses lies,
'Till Pallas pour'd soft slumbers on his eyes;
And golden dreams (the gift of sweet repose)
Lull'd all his cares, and banish'd all his woes.

630

635

THE
SIXTH BOOK
OF THE
ODYSSEY.

A R G U M E N T.

PALLAS, appearing in a dream to Nauficæa (the daughter of Alcinous king of Phæacia), commands her to descend to the river, and wash the robes of state, in preparation to her nuptials. Nauficæa goes with her handmaids to the river; where while the garments are spread on the bank, they divert themselves in sports. Their voices awake Ulysses, who, addressing himself to the princess, is by her relieved and cloathed, and receives directions in what manner to apply to the king and queen of the island.

THE
O D Y S S E Y.
B O O K VI.

WHILE thus the weary wanderer sunk to rest,
 And peaceful slumbers calm'd his anxious breast;
 The Martial Maid from heaven's aerial height
 Swift to Phæacia wing'd her rapid flight.
 In elder times the soft Phæacian train 5
 In ease possess'd the wide Hyperian plain;
 Till the Cyclopean race in arms arose,
 A lawless nation of gigantic foes:
 Then great Naufithous from Hyperia far,
 Through seas retreating from the sound of war, 10
 The recreant nation to fair Scheria led,
 Where never science rear'd her laurel'd head:
 There, round his tribes a strength of wall he rais'd;
 To heaven the glittering domes and temples blaz'd:
 Just to his realms, he parted grounds from grounds, 15
 And shar'd the lands, and gave the lands their bounds.
 Now in the silent grave the monarch lay,
 And wise Alcinous held the regal sway.
 To his high palace through the fields of air
 The Goddesses shot; Ulysses was her care. 20
 There as the night in silence roll'd away,
 A heaven of charms divine Nausicaa lay:

Through

Through the thick gloom the shining portals blaze;
 Two nymphs the portals guard, each nymph a Grace.
 Light as the viewless air the Warriour-Maid 25
 Glides through the valves, and hovers round her head;
 A favourite virgin's blooming form she took,
 From Dymas sprung, and thus the vision spoke:

Oh indolent! to waste thy hours away!
 And sleep'st thou careless of the bridal day? 30
 Thy spousal ornament neglected lies;
 Arise, prepare the bridal train, arise!
 A just applause the cares of dress impart,
 And give soft transport to a parent's heart.
 Hasten, to the limpid stream direct thy way, 35
 When the gay morn unveils her smiling ray:
 Hasten to the stream! Companion of thy care,
 Lo, I thy steps attend, thy labours share.
 Virgin, awake! the marriage-hour is nigh,
 See! from their thrones thy kindred monarchs sigh! 40
 The royal car at early dawn obtain,
 And order mules obedient to the rein;
 For rough the way, and distant rolls the wave,
 Where their fair vests Phæacian virgins lave.
 In pomp ride forth; for pomp becomes the Great, 45
 And majesty derives a grace from state.

Then to the palaces of heaven she sails,
 Incumbent on the wings of wafting gales:
 The seat of Gods; the regions mild of peace,
 Full joy, and calm eternity of ease. 50
 There no rude winds presume to shake the skies,
 No rains descend, no snowy vapours rise;

But

But on immortal thrones the blest repose :
The firmament with living splendours glows.
Hither the Goddess wing'd th' aerial way, 55
Through heaven's eternal gates that blaz'd with day.

Now from her rosy car Aurora shed
The dawn, and all the orient flam'd with red.
Uprose the virgin with the morning light,
Obedient to the vision of the night. 60

The queen she fought : the queen her hours bestow'd
In curious works ; the whirling spindle glow'd
With crimson threads, while busy damsels cull
The snowy fleece, or twist the purpled wool.
Meanwhile Phæacia's peers in council sate ; 65
From his high dome the king descends in state,
Then with a filial awe the royal maid

Approach'd him passing, and submissive said :
Will my dread sire his ear regardful deign,
And may his child the royal ear obtain ? 70

Say, with thy garments shall I bend my way,
Where through the vales the mazy waters stray ?
A dignity of dress adorns the great,
And kings draw lustre from the robe of state.

Five sons thou hast ; three wait the bridal day, 75
And spotless robes become the young and gay :
So when with praise amid the dance they shine,
By these my cares adorn'd, that praise is mine.

Thus she : but blushes ill-restrain'd betray
Her thoughts intentive on the bridal day : 80

The conscious fire the dawning blush survey'd,
And smiling thus bespoke the blooming maid :

My child, my darling joy, the car receive;
That, and whate'er our daughter asks, we give.

Swift at the royal nod th' attending train 85
The car prepare, the mules incessant rein.

The blooming virgin with dispatchful cares
Tunicks, and stoles, and robes imperial, bears.

The queen, assiduous, to her train assigns 90
The sumptuous viands, and the flavorful wines.

The train prepare a cruise of curious mould,
A cruise of fragrance, form'd of burnish'd gold;

Odour divine! whose soft refreshing streams
Sleek the smooth skin, and scent the snowy limbs.

Now mounting the gay seat, the silken reins 95
Shine in her hand: along the founding plains

Swift fly the mules: nor rode the nymph alone;
Around, a bevy of bright damsels shone.

They seek the cisterns where Phæacian dames 100
Wash their fair garments in the limpid streams;

Where, gathering into depth from falling rills,
The lucid wave a spacious basin fills.

The mules unharnes'd range beside the main,
Or crop the verdant herbage of the plain.

Then emulous the royal robes they lave, 105
And plunge the vestures in the cleansing wave;

(The vestures cleans'd o'erspread the shelly sand,
Their snowy lustre whitens all the strand:)

'Then with a short repast relieve their toil,
And o'er their limbs diffuse ambrosial oil; 110

And, while the robes imbibe the solar ray,
O'er the green mead the sporting virgins play

(Their

(Their shining veils unbound). Along the skies
Toft, and retoft, the ball incessant flies.

They sport, they feast; Nauficaa lifts her voice, 115
And, warbling sweet, makes earth and heaven rejoice.

As when o'er Erymanth Diana roves,
Or wide Táygetus' resounding groves;
A sylvan train the huntress queen furrounds,
Her rattling quiver from her shoulder sounds: 120

Fierce in the sport, along the mountain's brow
They bay the boar, or chace the bounding roe:
High o'er the lawn with more majestic pace,
Above the nymphs she treads with stately grace;
Distinguish'd excellence the Goddess proves; 125
Exults Latona, as the virgin moves.

With equal grace Nauficaa trod the plain,
And shone transcendent o'er the beauteous train.

Meantime (the care and favourite of the skies)
Wrapt in embowering shade, Ulysses lies, 130
His woes forgot! but Pallas now addrest
To break the bands of all-composing rest.

Forth from her snowy hand Nauficaa threw
The various ball; the ball erroneous flew,
And swam the stream: loud shrieks the virgin train,
And the loud shriek redoubles from the main.

Wak'd by the shrilling sound, Ulysses rose,
And, to the deaf woods wailing, breath'd his woes:

Ah me! on what inhospitable coast,
Or what new region, is Ulysses tost: 140

Possess'd by wild barbarians fierce in arms;
Or men, whose bosom tender pity warms?

What

What sounds are these that gather from the shores:
 The voice of nymphs that haunt the sylvan bowers,
 The fair-hair'd Dryads of the shady wood; 145
 Or azure daughters of the silver flood;
 Or human voice? but, issuing from the shades,
 Why cease I straight to learn what sound invades?

Then, where the grove with leaves umbrageous bends
 With forceful strength a branch the hero rends; 150
 Around his loins the verdant cincture spreads
 A wreathy foliage and concealing shades.
 As when a lion in the midnight hours,
 Beat by rude blasts, and wet with wintery showers,
 Descends terrific from the mountain's brow: 155
 With living flames his rolling eye-balls glow;
 With conscious strength elate, he bends his way,
 Majestically fierce, to seize his prey
 (The steer or stag): or with keen hunger bold,
 Springs o'er the fence, and dissipates the fold. 160
 No less a terror, from the neighbouring groves
 (Rough from the tossing surge) Ulysses moves;
 Urg'd on by want, and recent from the storms;
 The brackish ooze his manly face deforms.
 Wide o'er the shore with many a piercing cry 165
 To rocks, to caves, the frighted virgins fly:
 All but the nymph: the nymph stood fix'd alone,
 By Pallas arm'd with boldness not her own.
 Meantime in dubious thought the king awaits,
 And, self-considering, as he stands, debates; 170
 Distant his mournful story to declare,
 Or prostrate at her knee address the prayer.

ODYSSEY, Book VI.

177

But fearful to offend, by Wisdom sway'd,
At awful distance he accosts the maid :

If from the skies a Goddess, or if earth

175

(Imperial virgin) boast thy glorious birth,

To thee I bend! if in that bright disguise

Thou visit earth, a daughter of the skies,

Hail, Dian, hail! the huntress of the groves

So shines majestic, and so stately moves,

180

So breathes an air divine! But if thy race

Be mortal, and this earth thy native place,

Blest is the father from whose loins you sprung

Blest is the mother at whose breast you hung,

Blest are the brethren who thy blood divide,

185

To such a miracle of charms ally'd :

Joyful they see applauding princes gaze,

When stately in the dance you swim th' harmonious
maze.

But blest o'er all, the youth with heavenly charms,

Who clasps the bright perfection in his arms!

190

Never, I never view'd till this blest hour

Such finish'd grace! I gaze, and I adore!

Thus seems the palm with stately honours crown'd

By Phœbus' altars; thus o'erlooks the ground;

The pride of Delos. (By the Delian coast,

195

I voyag'd, leader of a warrior-host,

But ah, how chang'd! from thence my sorrow flows;

O fatal voyage, source of all my woes!)

Raptur'd I stood, and, as this hour amaz'd,

With reverence at the lofty wonder gaz'd;

200

Raptur'd I stand! for earth ne'er knew to bear

A plant so stately, or a nymph so fair.

Vol. L.

N

Aw'd

Aw'd from access, I lift my suppliant hands;
 For misery, O queen, before thee stands!
 Twice ten tempestuous nights I roll'd, resign'd 205
 To roaring billows, and the warring wind;
 Heaven bade the deep to spare! but Heaven, my foe,
 Spares only to inflict some mightier woe!
 Inur'd to care, to death in all its forms;
 Outcast I rove, familiar with the storms! 210
 Once more I view the face of human-kind:
 Oh, let soft pity touch thy generous mind!
 Unconscious of what air I breathe, I stand
 Naked, defenceless, on a foreign land.
 Propitious to my wants a vest supply 215
 To guard the wretched from th' inclement sky:
 So may the Gods, who heaven and earth control,
 Crown the chaste wishes of thy virtuous soul,
 On thy soft hours their choicest blessings shed;
 Blest with a husband be thy bridal bed; 220
 Blest be thy husband with a blooming race,
 And lasting union crown your blissful days.
 The Gods, when they supremely bless bestow
 Firm union on their favourites below:
 Then envy grieves, with inly-pining hate; 225
 The good exult, and Heaven is in our state.

To whom the nymph: O stranger, cease thy care;
 Wise is thy soul, but man is born to bear:
 Jove weighs affairs of earth, in dubious scales,
 And the good suffers, while the bad prevails: 230
 Bear, with a soul resign'd, the will of Jove;
 Who breathes, must mourn: thy woes are from above.

But,

But since thou tread'st our hospitable shore,
 'Tis mine to bid the wretched grieve no more,
 To clothe the naked, and thy way to guide— 235
 Know, the Phæacian tribes this land divide;
 From great Alcinous' royal loins I spring,
 A happy nation, and an happy king.

Then to her maids: Why, why, ye coward train,
 These fears, this flight? Ye fear, and fly in vain. 240
 Dread ye a foe? dismiss that idle dread,

'Tis death with hostile steps these shores to tread:
 Safe in the love of Heaven, an ocean flows
 Around our realm, a barrier from the foes;
 'Tis ours this son of sorrow to relieve, 245
 Cheer the sad heart, nor let affliction grieve.

By Jove the stranger and the poor are sent;
 And what to those we give, to Jove is lent.
 Then food supply, and bathe his fainting limbs
 Where waving shades obscure the mazy streams. 250

Obedient to the call, the chief they guide
 To the calm current of the secret tide:
 Close by the stream a royal dress they lay,
 A vest and robe, with rich embroidery gay:
 Then unguents in a vase of gold supply, 255
 That breath'd a fragrance through the balmy sky.

To them the king; No longer I detain
 Your friendly care: retire, ye virgin train!
 Retire, while from my weary'd limbs I lave
 The foul pollution of the briny wave: 260
 Ye Gods! since this worn frame refection knew,
 What scenes have I survey'd of dreadful view!

But, nymphs, recede! sage chastity denies
To raise the blush, or pain the modest eyes.

The nymphs withdrawn, at once into the tide 265
Active he bounds; the flashing waves divide:
O'er all his limbs his hands the wave diffuse,
And from his locks compress the weedy ooze;
The balmy oil, a fragrant shower, he sheds;
Then, drest, in pomp magnificently treads. 270
The Warriour Goddess gives his frame to shine
With majesty enlarg'd, and air divine:
Back from his brow a length of hair unfurls,
His hyacinthine locks descend in wavy curls.
As by some artist, to whom Vulcan gives 275
His skill divine, a breathing statue lives;
By Pallas taught, he frames the wondrous mould,
And o'er the silver pours the fusile gold.
So Pallas his heroic frame improves
With heavenly bloom, and like a God he moves. 280
A fragrance breathes around: majestic grace
Attends his steps: th' astonish'd virgins gaze.
Soft he reclines along the murmuring seas,
Inhaling freshness from the fanning breeze.

The wondering nymph his glorious port survey'd,
And to her damsels, with amazement, said:

Not without care divine the stranger treads
This land of joy: his steps some Godhead leads:
Would Jove destroy him, sure he had been driven
Far from this realm, the favourite isle of Heaven. 290
Late a sad spectacle of woe, he trod
The desert sands, and now he looks a God.

Oh,

Oh, Heaven! in my connubial hour decree
This man my spouse, or such a spouse as he!
But haste, the viands and the bowl provide—
The maids the viands, and the bowl supply'd:
Eager he fed, for keen his hunger rag'd,
And with the generous vintage thirst asswag'd.

295

Now on return her care Nauficæa bends,
The robes resumes, the glittering car ascends,
Far blooming o'er the field: and as she press'd
The splendid feat, the listening chief address'd:

300

Stranger, arise! the sun rolls down the day,
Lo! to the palace I direct the way:

Where in high state the nobles of the land
Attend my royal fire, a radiant band.

305

But hear, though wisdom in thy soul presides,
Speaks from thy tongue, and every action guides;
Advance at distance while I pass the plain

Where o'er the furrows waves the golden grain:

310

Alone I re-ascend—With airy mounds

A strength of wall the guarded city bounds:

The jutting land two ample bays divides:

Full through the narrow mouths descend the tides:

The spacious basons arching rocks enclose,

315

A sure defence from every storm that blows.

Close to the bay great Neptune's fane adjoins;

And near, a forum flank'd with marble shines,

Where the bold youth, the numerous fleets to store,

Shape the broad sail, or smooth the taper oar:

320

For not the bow they bend, nor boast the skill

To give the feather'd arrows wings to kill

But the tall mast above the vessel rear,
 Or teach the fluttering sail to float in air.
 They rush into the deep with eager joy,
 Climb the steep surge, and through the tempest fly;
 A proud, unpolish'd race—To me belongs
 The care to shun the blast of slanderous tongues;
 Lest malice, prone the virtuous to defame,
 Thus with vile censure taint my spotless name: 330

“What stranger this whom thus Nauficæa leads?
 “Heavens, with what graceful majesty he treads!
 “Perhaps a native of some distant shore,
 “The future consort of her bridal hour;
 “Or rather some descendant of the skies;
 “Won by her prayers, th’ ærial bridegroom flies.
 “Heaven on that hour his choicest influence shed,
 “That gave a foreign spouse to crown her bed!
 “All, all the god-like worthies that adorn
 “This realm, she flies: Phæacia is her scorn.” 340

And just the blame; for female innocence
 Not only flies the guilt, but shuns th’ offence:
 Th’ unguarded virgin, as unchaste, I blame;
 And the least freedom with the sex is shame,
 Till our consenting fires a spouse provide,
 And public nuptials justify the bride. 345

But would’st thou soon review thy native plain,
 Attend, and speedy thou shalt pass the main:
 Nigh where a grove with verdant poplars crown’d,
 To Pallas sacred, shades the holy ground, 350
 We bend our way: a bubbling fount distils
 A lucid lake, and thence descends in rills;

Around

Around the grove a mead with lively green
 Falls by degrees, and forms a beauteous scene;
 Here a rich juice the royal vineyard pours; 355
 And there the garden yields a waste of flowers.
 Hence lies the town, as far as to the ear
 Floats a strong shout along the waves of air.
 There wait embower'd, while I ascend alone
 To great Alcinous on his royal throne. 360
 Arriv'd, advance impatient of delay,
 And to the lofty palace bend thy way :
 The lofty palace overlooks the town,
 From every dome by pomp superior known ;
 A child may point the way. With earnest gait 365
 Seek thou the queen along the rooms of state ;
 Her royal hand a wonderous work designs,
 Around a circle of bright damsels shines,
 Part twist the threads, and part the wood dispose,
 While with the purple orb the spindle glows. 370
 High on a throne, amid the Scherian powers,
 My royal father shares the genial hours :
 But to the queen thy mournful tale disclose,
 With the prevailing eloquence of woes :
 So shalt thou view with joy thy natal shore, 375
 Though mountains rise between, and oceans roar.
 She added not, but waving as she wheel'd
 The silver scourge, it glitter'd o'er the field:
 With skill the virgin guides th' embroider'd rein,
 Slow rolls the car before the attending train. 380
 Now whirling down the heavens, the golden day
 Shot through the western clouds a dewy ray ;

The grove they reach, where from the sacred shade,
To Pallas thus the pensive hero pray'd :

Daughter of Jove ! whose arms in thunder wield
Th' avenging bold, and shake the dreadful shield ;
Forsook by thee, in vain I fought thy aid
When booming billows clos'd above my head :

Attend, unconquer'd Maid ! accord my vows,
Bid the great hear, and pitying heal my woes.

390

This heard Minerva, but forbore to fly
(By Neptune aw'd) apparent from the sky :
Stern God ! who rag'd with vengeance unrestrain'd,
Till great Ulysses hail'd his native land.

THE
SEVENTH BOOK

OF THE
ODYSSEY.

A R G U M E N T.

The Court of Alcinous.

THE Princess Nausicaa returns to the city, and Ulysses soon after follows thither. He is met by Pallas in the form of a young virgin, who guides him to the palace, and directs him in what manner to address the queen Arete. She then involves him in a mist, which causes him to pass invisible. The palace and gardens of Alcinous described. Ulysses falling at the feet of the queen, the mist disperses, the Phæacians admire, and receive him with respect. The queen enquiring by what means he had the garments he then wore, he relates to her and Alcinous his departure from Calypso, and his arrival on their dominions.

The same day continues, and the book ends with the night.

T H E
O D Y S S E Y.

B O O K VII.

THE patient, heavenly man thus suppliant pray'd;
 While the slow mules draw on th' imperial maid:
 Through the proud streets she moves, the public gaze:
 The turning wheel before the palace stays.
 With ready love her brothers gathering round, 5
 Receiv'd the vestures, and the mules unbound.
 She seeks the bridal bower: a matron there
 The rising fire supplies with busy care,
 Whose charms in youth the father's heart inflam'd,
 Now worn with age, Eurymedusa nam'd: 10
 The captive dame Phæacian rovers bore,
 Snatch'd from Epirus, her sweet native shore,
 (A grateful prize) and in her bloom bestow'd
 On good Alcinous, honour'd as a God:
 Nurse of Nausicaa from her infant years, 15
 And tender second to a mother's cares.

Now from the sacred thicket where he lay,
 To town Ulysses took the winding way.
 Propitious Pallas, to secure her care,
 Around him spread a veil of thicken'd air; 20
 To shun th' encounter of the vulgar crowd,
 Insulting still, inquisitive and loud.

When

When near the fam'd Phæacian walls he drew,
 The beauteous city opening to his view,
 His step a virgin met, and stood before :
 A polish'd urn the seeming virgin bore,
 And youthful smil'd ; but in the low disguise
 Lay hid the Goddess with the azure eyes.

25

Show me, fair daughter, (thus the chief demands)
 The house of him who rules these happy lands.
 Through many woes and wanderings, lo ! I come
 To good Alcinous' hospitable dome.
 Far from my native coast, I rove alone,
 A wretched stranger, and of all unknown !

35

The Goddess answer'd, Father, I obey,
 And point the wandering traveller his way :
 Well known to me the palace you inquire,
 For fast beside it dwells my honour'd fire ;
 But silent march, nor greet the common train.
 With questions needless, or enquiry vain,
 A race of rugged mariners are these ;
 Unpolish'd men, and boisterous as their seas :
 The native islanders alone their care,
 And hateful he who breathes a foreign air.
 These did the Ruler of the deep ordain
 To build proud navies, and command the main ;
 On canvass wings to cut the watery way ;
 No bird so light, no thought so swift, as they.

40

45

Thus having spoke, th' unknown Celestial leads :
 The footstep of the Deity he treads,
 And secret moves along the crouded space,
 Unseen of all the rude Phæacian race.

50

(So Pallas order'd, Pallas to their eyes
 The mist objected, and condens'd the skies).
 The chief with wonder sees th' extended streets, 55
 The spreading harbours, and the rising fleets;
 He next their princes lofty domes admires,
 In separate islands crown'd with rising spires;
 And deep intrenchments, and high walls of stone,
 That gird the city like a marble zone, 60
 At length the kingly palace-gates he view'd;
 There stopp'd the Goddess, and her speech renew'd:
 My task is done; the mansion you inquire
 Appears before you: enter, and admire.
 High thron'd, and feasting, there thou shalt behold 65
 The sceptred rulers. Fear not, but be bold:
 A decent boldness ever meets with friends,
 Succeeds, and ev'n a stranger recommends.
 First to the queen prefer a suppliant's claim,
 Alcinous' queen, Arete is her name, 70 }
 The same her parents, and her power the same.
 For know, from Ocean's God Naufithous sprung,
 And Peribæa, beautiful and young
 (Eurymedon's last hope, who rul'd of old
 The race of giants, impious, proud, and bold; 75
 Perish'd the nation in unrighteous war,
 Perish'd the prince, and left this only heir).
 Who now, by Neptune's amorous power compress'd,
 Produc'd a monarch that his people blest,
 Father and prince of the Phæacian name; 80
 From him Rhexenor and Alcinous came.
 The first by Phœbus' burning arrows fir'd,
 New from his nuptials, hapless youth! expir'd.
 No

No son surviv'd: Arete heir'd his state,
 And her, Alcinous chose his royal mate. 85
 With honours yet to womankind unknown,
 This queen he graces, and divides the throne:
 In equal tenderness her sons conspire,
 And all the children emulate their fire.
 When through the streets she gracious deigns to move,
 (The public wonder and the public love)
 The tongues of all with transport sound her praise
 The eyes of all, as on a Goddess, gaze.
 She feels the triumph of a generous breast:
 To heal divisions, to relieve th' oppress'd; 95
 In virtue rich; in blessing others, blest.
 Go then secure, thy humble suit prefer,
 And owe thy country and thy friends to her.

With that the Goddess deign'd no longer stay,
 But o'er the world of waters wing'd her way: 100
 Forsaking Scheria's ever-pleasing shore,
 The winds to Marathon the virgin bore;
 Thence, where proud Athens rears her towery head,
 With opening streets and shining structures spread,
 She past, delighted with the well-known seats; 105
 And to Erectheus' sacred dome retreats.

Meanwhile Ulysses at the palace waits,
 There stops, and anxious with his soul debates, }
 Fix'd in amaze before the royal gates.
 The front appear'd with radiant splendors gay, 110
 Bright as the lamp of night, or orb of day,
 The walls were massy brass; the cornice high
 Blue metals crown'd, in colours of the sky:

ODYSSEY, BOOK VII.

195

Rich plates of gold the folding doors incase;

The pillars silver, on a brazen base;

115

Silver the lintals deep projecting o'er,

And gold, the ringlets that command the door.

Two rows of stately dogs on either hand,

In sculptur'd gold and labour'd silver stand.

These Vulcan form'd with art divine, to wait

120

Immortal guardians at Alcinous' gate;

Alive each animated frame appears,

And still to live beyond the power of years.

Fair thrones within from space to space were rais'd,

Where various carpets with embroidery blaz'd,

125

The work of matrons: these the princess prest,

Day following day, a long continued feast.

Refulgent pedestals the walls surround,

Which boys of gold with flaming torches crown'd;

The polish'd ore, reflecting every ray,

130

Blaz'd on the banquets with a double day.

Full fifty handmaids form the household train;

Some turn the mill, or sift the golden grain;

Some ply the loom: their busy fingers move

Like poplar-leaves when Zephyr fans the grove.

135

Not more renown'd the men of Scheria's isle,

For sailing arts and all the naval toil,

Than works of female skill their women's pride,

The flying shuttle through the threads to guide:

Pallas to these her double gifts imparts,

140

Inventive genius, and industrious arts.

Close to the gates a spacious garden lies,

From storms defended and inclement skies.

Four

Four acres was the allotted space of ground,
 Fenc'd with a green enclosure all around, 145
 Tall thriving trees confess'd the fruitful mould;
 The reddening apple ripens here to gold.
 Here the blue fig with luscious juice o'erflows,
 With deeper red the full pomegranate glows,
 The branch here bends beneath the weighty pear, 150
 And verdant olives flourish round the year.
 The balmy spirit of the western gale
 Eternal breathes on fruits untaught to fail:
 Each dropping pear a following pear supplies,
 On apples apples, figs on figs arise: 155
 The same mild season gives the blooms to blow,
 The buds to harden, and the fruits to grow.

Here order'd vines in equal ranks appear,
 With all th' united labours of the year;
 Some to unload the fertile branches run, 160
 Some dry the blackening clusters in the sun,
 Others to tread the liquid harvest join,
 The groaning presses foam with floods of wine.
 Here are the vines in early flower descry'd,
 Here grapes discolour'd on the sunny side,
 And there in autumn's richest purple dy'd.

Beds of all various herbs, for ever green,
 In beauteous order terminate the scene.

Two plenteous fountains the whole prospect crown'd;
 This through the garden leads its streams around,
 Visits each plant, and waters all the ground:
 While that in pipes beneath the palace flows,
 And thence its current on the town bestows;

To various use their various streams they bring,
The people one, and one supplies the king. 175

Such were the glories which the Gods ordain'd,
To grace Alcinous, and his happy land.
Ev'n from the chief who men and nations knew,
Th' unwonted scene surprize and rapturè drew;
In pleasing thought he ran the prospect o'er, 180
Then hasty enter'd at the lofty door.

Night now approaching, in the palace stand,
With goblets crown'd, the rulers of the land;
Prepar'd for rest, and offering to the * God
Who bears the virtue of the sleepy rod. 185

Unseen he glided through the joyous crowd,
With darkness circled, and an ambient cloud.
Direct to great Alcinous' throne he came,
And prostrate fell before th' imperial dame.
Then from around him dropt the veil of night; 190
Sudden he shines, and manifest to sight,
The nobles gaze, with awful fear oppress;
Silent they gaze, and eye the god-like guest.

Daughter of great Rhexenor! (thus began
Low at her knees the much-enduring man) 195

To thee, thy consort, and this royal train,
To all that share the blessings of your reign,

A suppliant bends: Oh, pity human woe!

'Tis what the happy to th' unhappy owe.

A wretched exile to his country send, 200

Long worn with griefs, and long without a friend.

So may the Gods your better days increase,

And all your joys descend on all your race,

* Mercury.

So reign for ever on your country's breast,
Your people blessing, by your people blest!

205

Then to the genial hearth he bow'd his face,
And humbled in the ashes took his place.
Silence ensued. The eldest first began,
Echeneus sage, a venerable man!

Whose well-taught mind the present age surpass, 210
And join'd to that th' experience of the last.
Fit words attended on his weighty sense,
And mild persuasion flow'd in eloquence.

O fight (he cry'd) dishonest and unjust!
A guest, a stranger, seated in the dust! 215

To raise the lowly suppliant from the ground
Befits a monarch. Lo! the peers around
But wait thy word, the gentle guest to grace,
And seat him fair in some distinguish'd place.
Let first the herald due libation pay 220

To Jove, who guides the wanderer on his way;
Then set the genial banquet in his view,
And give the stranger-guest a stranger's due.

His sage advice the listening king obeys,
He stretch'd his hand the prudent chief to raise, 225
And from his seat Laodamas remov'd

(The monarch's offspring, and his best belov'd);
There next his side the god-like hero sate;
With stars of silver shone the bed of state.

The golden ewer a beauteous handmaid brings, 230
Replenish'd from the cool translucent springs,
Whose polish'd vase with copious streams supplies
A silver-laver of capacious size.

The

The table next in regal order spread,
 The glittering canisters are heap'd with bread : 235
 Viands of various kinds invite the taste,
 Of choicest sort and savour, rich repast !
 Thus feasting high, Alcinous gave the sign,
 And bade the herald pour the rosy wine.
 Let all around the due libation pay 240
 To Jove, who guides the wanderer on his way.
 He said. Pontonous heard the king's command ;
 The circling goblet moves from hand to hand :
 Each drinks the juice that glads the heart of man.
 Alcinous then, with aspect mild, began : 245
 Princes and peers, attend ; while we impart
 To you, the thoughts of no inhuman heart.
 Now pleas'd and satiate from the social rite
 Repair we to the blessings of the night :
 But with the rising day, assembled here, 250
 Let all the elders of the land appear,
 Pious observe our hospitable laws,
 And Heaven propitiate in the stranger's cause :
 Then, join'd in council, proper means explore
 Safe to transport him to the wish'd-for shore 255
 (How distant that, imports not us to know,
 Nor weigh the labour, but relieve the woe).
 Meantime, nor harm nor anguish let him bear :
 This interval, Heaven trusts him to our care ;
 But to his native land our charge resign'd, 260
 Heaven 's his life to come, and all the woes behind.
 Then must he suffer what the Fates ordain ;
 For Fate has wove the thread of life with pain,
 And twins ev'n from the birth are misery and man ! }

But if, descended from th' Olympian bower, 265
 Gracious, approach us some immortal power;
 If in that form thou com'st a guest divine:
 Some high event the conscious Gods design.
 As yet, unbid they never grac'd our feast,
 The solemn sacrifice call'd down the guest; 270
 Then manifest of heaven the vision stood,
 And to our eyes familiar was the God.
 Oft with some favour'd traveller they stray,
 And shine before him all the desert way:
 With social intercourse, and face to face, 275
 The friends and guardians of our pious race.
 So near approach we their celestial kind,
 By justice, truth, and probity of mind:
 As our dire neighbours of Cyclopean birth
 Match in fierce wrong the Giant-sons of earth. 280
 Let no such thought (with modest grace rejoin'd
 The prudent Greek) possess the royal mind.
 Alas! a mortal, like thyself, am I;
 No glorious native of yon azure sky:
 In form, ah how unlike their heavenly kind! 285
 How more inferior in the gifts of mind!
 Alas, a mortal! most oppress'd of those
 Whom Fate has loaded with a weight of woes;
 By a sad train of miseries alone
 Distinguish'd long, and second now to none! 290
 By Heaven's high will compell'd from shore to shore;
 With Heaven's high will prepar'd to suffer more.
 What histories of toil could I declare!
 But still long-wearied nature wants repair;

Spent with fatigue, and shrunk with pining fast, 295

My craving bowels still require repast.

Howe'er the noble, suffering mind, may grieve

Its load of anguish, and disdain to live;

Necessity demands our daily bread;

Hunger is insolent, and will be fed.

300

But finish, oh ye peers! what you propose,

And let the morrow's dawn conclude my woes.

Pleas'd will I suffer all the Gods ordain,

To see my foil, my son, my friends, again.

That view vouchsaf'd, let instant death surprize 305

With ever-during shade these happy eyes!

Th'assembled peers with general praise approv'd

His pleaded reason, and the suit he mov'd.

Each drinks a full oblivion of his cares,

And to the gift of balmy sleep repairs.

310

Ulysses in the regal walls alone

Remain'd: beside him, on a splendid throne,

Divine Arete and Alcinous shone.

}

The queen, on nearer view, the guest survey'd

Rob'd in the garments her own hands had made; 315

Not without wonder seen. Then thus began,

Her words addressing to the god-like man:

Can'st thou not hither, wondrous stranger! say,

From lands remote, and o'er a length of sea!

Tell then whence art thou? whence that princely air?

And robes like these, so recent and so fair!

Hard is the task, oh princess! you impose:

(Thus sighing spoke the man of many woes)

The long, the mournful series to relate

Of all my sorrows sent by Heaven and Fate!

325

Yet

Yet what you ask, attend. An island lies
 Beyond these tracts, and under other skies,
 Ogygia nam'd, in Ocean's watery arms;
 Where dwells Calypso, dreadful in her charms!
 Remote from Gods or men she holds her reign, 330
 Amid the terrours of the rolling main.
 Me, only me, the hand of fortune bore
 Unblest! to tread that interdicted shore:
 When Jove tremendous in the sable deeps
 Launch'd his red lightning at our scatter'd ships: 335
 Then, all my fleet, and all my followers lost,
 Sole on a plank, on boiling surges tost,
 Heaven drove my wreck th' Ogygian isle to find,
 Full nine days floating to the wave and wind.
 Met by the Goddess there with open arms, 340
 She brib'd my stay with more than human charms:
 Nay promis'd, vainly promis'd, to bestow
 Immortal life, exempt from age and woe:
 But all her blandishments successless prove,
 'To banish from my breast my country's love. 345
 I stay reluctant seven continued years,
 And water her ambrosial couch with tears.
 The eighth she voluntary moves to part,
 Or urg'd by Jove, or her own changeful heart.
 A raft was form'd, to cross the surging sea; 350
 Herself supply'd the stores and rich array;
 And gave the gales to waft me on the way.
 In seventeen days appear'd your pleasing coast,
 And woody mountains half in vapours lost.
 Joy touch'd my soul: my soul was joy'd in vain, 355
 For angry Neptune rous'd the raging main;

The

The wild winds whistle, and the billows roar ;
The splitting raft the furious tempest tore ;
And storms vindictive intercept the shore.
Soon as their rage subsides, the seas I brave
With naked force, and shoot along the wave,
To reach this isle : but there my hopes were lost,
The surge impell'd me on a craggy coast.

360

I chose the safer sea, and chanc'd to find
A river's mouth impervious to the wind,
And clear of rocks. I fainted by the flood ;
Then took the shelter of the neighbouring wood.
'Twas night ; and, cover'd in the foliage deep,
Jove plung'd my senses in the death of sleep.

365

All night I slept, oblivious of my pain :
Aurora dawn'd and Phœbus shin'd in vain,
Nor, till oblique he stop'd his evening ray,
Had Somnus dry'd the balmy dew's away.

370

Then female voices from the shore I heard :
A maid amidst them, goddess-like, appear'd :

375

To her I sued, she pity'd my distress ;
Like thee in beauty, nor in virtue less.

Who from such youth could hope considerate care ?

In youth and beauty wisdom is but rare !

She gave me life, reliev'd with just supplies

380

My wants, and lent these robes that strike your eyes.

This is the truth : and oh, ye Powers on high !

Forbid that want should sink me to a lie.

To this the king : Our daughter but express

Her cares imperfect to our god-like guest.

385

Suppliant to her, since first he chose to pray,
 Why not herself did she conduct the way,
 And with her handmaids to our court convey?

Hero and king! (Ulysses thus reply'd)

Nor blame her faultless, nor suspect her pride:
 She bade me follow in th' attendant train;
 But fear and reverence did my steps detain,
 Lest rash suspicion might alarm thy mind:
 Man's of a jealous and mistaking kind.

Far from my soul (he cry'd) the Gods efface
 All wrath ill-grounded, and suspicion base!
 Whate'er is honest, stranger, I approve;
 And would to Phœbus, Pallas, and to Jove,
 Such as thou art, thy thought and mine were one,
 Nor thou unwilling to be call'd my son.

In such alliance could'st thou wish to join,
 A palace stor'd with treasures should be thine.

But, if reluctant, who shall force thy stay?

Jove bids to set the stranger on his way,

And ships shall wait thee with the morning ray.

Till then, let slumber close thy careful eyes;

The wakeful mariners shall watch the skies,

And seize the moment when the breezes rise:

Then gently waft thee to the pleasing shore,

Where thy soul rests, and labour is no more.

Far as Eubœa though thy country lay,

Our ships with ease transport thee in a day.

Thither of old, earth's * giant-son to view,

On wings of winds with Rhadamanth they flew:

* Tityus.

This

This land, from whence their morning course begun,
Saw them returning with the setting sun.

Your eyes shall witness and confirm my tale,
Our youth how dextrous, and how fleet our sail.
When justly tim'd with equal sweep they row,
And ocean whitens in long tracts below.

420

Thus he. No word th' experienc'd man replies,
But thus to heaven (and heavenward lifts his eyes)
O, Jove! O, father! what the king accords
Do thou make perfect! sacred be his words!
Wide o'er the world Alcinous' glory shine!
Let fame be his, and ah! my country mine!

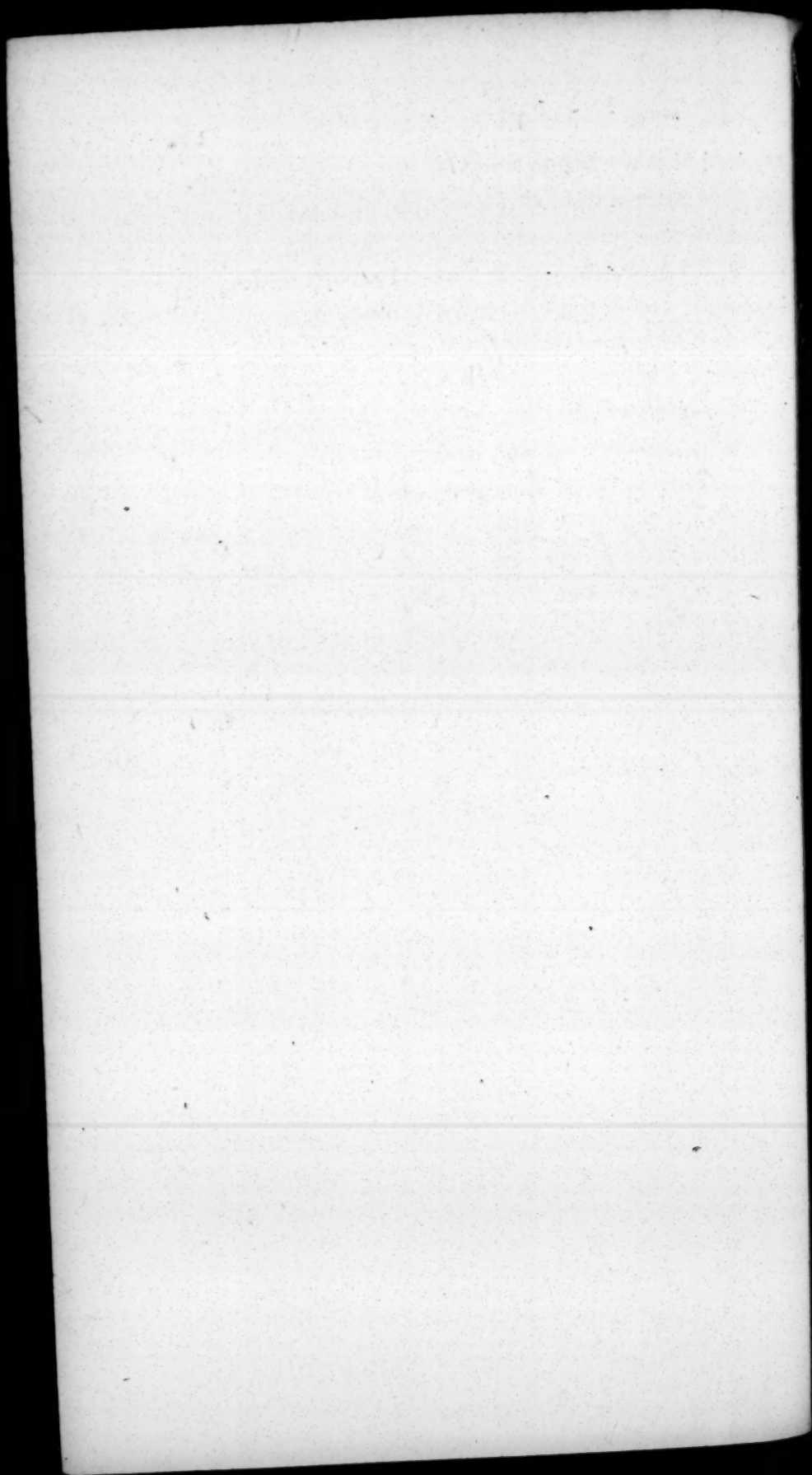
425

Meantime Arete, for the hour of rest,
Ordains the fleecy couch, and covering vest:
Bids her fair train the purple quilts prepare,
And the thick carpets spread with busy care.
With torches blazing in their hands they pass,
And finish'd all the queen's command with haste:
Then gave the signal to the willing guest:
He rose with pleasure, and retir'd to rest,
There, soft-extended, to the murmuring sound
Of the high porch, Ulysses sleeps profound!
Within, releas'd from cares Alcinous lies;
And fast beside were clos'd Arete's eyes.

430

435

THE



THE
EIGHTH BOOK
OF THE
ODYSSEY.

A R G U M E N T.

ALCINOUS calls a council, in which it is resolved to transport Ulysses into his country. After which, splendid entertainments are made, where the celebrated musician and poet Demodocus plays and sings to the guests. They next proceed to the games; the race, the wrestling, discus, &c. where Ulysses casts a prodigious length, to the admiration of all the spectators. They return again to the banquet, and Demodocus sings the loves of Mars and Venus. Ulysses, after a compliment to the poet, desires him to sing the introduction of the wooden horse into Troy; which subject provoking his tears, Alcinous enquires of his guest, his name, parentage, and fortunes.

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T H E

O D Y S S E Y.

B O O K VIII.

NOW fair Aurora lifts her golden ray,
 And all the ruddy orient flames with day :
 Alcinous, and the chief, with dawning light,
 Rose instant from the slumbers of the night ;
 Then to the council-seat they bend their way, 5
 And fill the shining thrones along the bay.

Meanwhile Minerva in her guardian care,
 Shoots from the starry vault through fields of air ;
 In form a herald of the king, she flies
 From peer to peer, and thus incessant cries : 10

Nobles and chiefs who rule Phæacia's states,
 The king in council your attendance waits :
 A Prince of Grace Divine your aid implores,
 O'er unknown seas arriv'd from unknown shores.

She spoke, and sudden with tumultuous sounds. 15
 Of thronging multitudes the shores rebounds :

At once the seats they fill : and every eye
 Gaz'd, as before some brother of the sky.

Pallas with grace divine his form improves,
 More high he treads, and more enlarg'd he moves : 20

She sheds celestial bloom, regard to draw ;

And gives a dignity of mien, to awe ;

With

With strength, the future prize of Fame to play,
And gather all the honours of the day.

Then from his glittering throne Alcinous rose: 25

Attend, he cry'd, while we our will disclose.

Your present aid this god-like stranger craves,

Toft by rude tempest through a war of waves;

Perhaps from realms that view the rising day,

Or nations subject to the western ray. 30

Then grant, what here all sons of woe obtain,

(For here affliction never pleads in vain:)

Be chosen youths prepar'd, expert to try

The vast profound, and bid the vessel fly:

Launch the tall bark, and order every oar; 35

Then in our court indulge the genial hour.

Instant, you sailors, to this task attend;

Swift to the palace, all ye peers ascend

Let none to strangers honours due disclaim:

Be there Demodocus, the Bard of Fame, 40

Taught by the Gods to please, when high he sings

The vocal lay, responsive to the strings.

Thus spoke the prince: th' attending peers obey,

In state they move; Alcinous leads the way:

Swift to Demodocus the herald flies, 45

At once the sailors to their charge arise:

They launch the vessel, and unfurl the sails,

And stretch the swelling canvass to the gales;

Then to the palace move: A gathering throng,

Youth, and white age, tumultuous pour along: 50

Now all accesses to the dome are fill'd;

Eight boars, the choicest of the herd, are kill'd:

Two

Two beeves, twelve fatlings, from the flock they bring
To crown the feast; so wills the bounteous king.
The herald now arrives, and guides along 55
The sacred master of celestial song:

Dear to the Muse! who gave his days to flow
With mighty blessings, mix'd with mighty woe:
With clouds of darkness quench'd his visual ray,
But gave him skill to raise the lofty lay. 60

High on a raciant throne sublime in state,
Encircled by huge multitudes, he sate:
With silver shone the throne; his lyre well strung
To rapturous sounds, at hand Pontonous hung:
Before his seat a polish'd table shines, 65
And a full goblet foams with generous wines:
His food a herald bore: and now they fed:
And now the rage of craving hunger fled.

Then, fir'd by all the Muse, aloud he sings
The mighty deeds of Demi-gods and Kings: 70
From that fierce wrath the noble song arose,
That made Ulysses and Achilles foes:
How o'er the feast they doom the fall of Troy;
The stern debate Atrides hears with joy:
For Heaven foretold the contest, when he trod 75
The marble threshold of the Delphic God,
Curious to learn the counsels of the sky,
Ere yet he loos'd the rage of war on Troy.

Touch'd at the song, Ulysses straight resign'd
To soft affliction all his manly mind: 80
Before his eyes the purple vest he drew,
Industrious to conceal the falling dew:

But

But when the music paus'd he ceas'd to shed
 The flowing tear, and rais'd his drooping head:
 And, lifting to the Gods a goblet crown'd,
 He pour'd a pure libation to the ground.

85

Transported with the song, the listening train
 Again with loud applause demand the strain:
 Again Ulysses veil'd his pensive head,
 Again, unmann'd, a shower of sorrow shed:
 Conceal'd he wept: the king observ'd alone
 The silent tear, and heard the secret groan:
 Then to the bard aloud: O cease to sing,
 Dumb be thy voice, and mute th' harmonious string;
 Enough the feast has pleas'd, enough the power
 Of heavenly song has crown'd the genial hour!
 Incessant in the games your strength display;
 Contest, ye brave, the honours of the day:
 That, pleas'd, th' admiring stranger may proclaim
 In distant regions the Phæacian fame:
 None wield the gauntlet with so dire a sway,
 Or swifter in the race devour the way;
 None in the leap spring with so strong a bound,
 Or firmer, in the wrestling, press the ground.

90

95

100

Thus spoke the king; th' attending peers obey:
 In state they move, Alcinous leads the way:
 His golden lyre Demodocus unstrung,
 High on a column in the palace hung:
 And, guided by a herald's guardian cares,
 Majestic to the lists of Fame repairs.

110

Now swarms the populace; a countless throng,
 Youth and hoar age; and man drives man along:

C

The

The games begin ; ambitious of the prize,
 Acroeneus, Thoon, and Eretmeus rise ;
 The prize Ocyalus and Prymneus claim, 115
 Anchialus and Ponteus, chiefs of Fame :
 There Proreus, Neates, Eratreus appear,
 And fam'd Amphialus, Polyneus' heir :
 Euryalus like Mars terrific rose,
 When clad in wrath he withers hosts of foes : 120
 Naubolides with grace unequall'd shone,
 Or equal'd by Laodamas alone.
 With these came forth Ambasineus the strong ;
 And three brave sons, from great Alcinous sprung.
 Rang'd in a line the ready racers stand, 125
 Start from the goal, and vanish o'er the strand :
 Swift as on wings of winds upborn they fly,
 And drifts of rising dust involve the sky :
 Before the rest, what space the hinds allow
 Between the mule and ox, from plough to plough ; 130
 Clytonous sprung : he wing'd the rapid way,
 And bore th' unrivall'd honours of the day.
 With fierce embrace the brawny wrestlers join ;
 The conquest, great Euryalus is thine.
 Amphialus sprung forward with a bound, 135
 Superior in the leap, a length of ground :
 From Elatreus' strong arm the discus flies,
 And sings with unmatch'd force along the skies.
 And Laodam whirls high, with dreadful sway,
 The gloves of death, victorious in the fray. 140
 While thus the peerage in the games contends,
 In act to speak, Laodamas ascends :

VOL. L.

P

O friends.

O friends, he cries, the stranger seems well skill'd
 To try th' illustrious labours of the field:
 I deem him brave: then grant the brave man's claim,
 Invite the hero to his share of Fame.
 What nervous arms he boasts! how firm his tread!
 His limbs how turn'd! how broad his shoulders spread:
 By age unbroke!—but all-consuming care
 Destroys, perhaps, that strength that time would spare:
 Dire is the ocean, dread in all its forms!
 Man must decay, when man contends with storms.

Well hast thou spoke (Euryalus replies):
 Thine is the guest, invite him thou to rise.
 Swift at the word advancing from the croud 155
 He made obeisance, and thus spoke aloud:

Vouchsafes the reverend stranger to display
 His manly worth, and share the glorious day?
 Father, arise! for thee thy port proclaims 160
 Expert to conquer in the solemn games.
 To fame arise! for what more fame can yield
 Than the swift race, or conflict of the field?
 Steal from corroding care one transient day,
 To glory give the space thou hast to stay;
 Short is the time, and, lo! ev'n now the gales 165
 Call thee aboard, and stretch the swelling sails.

To whom with sighs Ulysses gave reply:
 Ah! why th' ill-suiting pastime must I try?
 To gloomy care my thoughts alone are free;
 Ill the gay sports with troubled hearts agree: 170
 Sad from my natal hour my days have ran,
 A much-afflicted, much-enduring man!

Who suppliant to the king and peers implores
A speedy voyage to his native shores.

Wide wanders, Laodam, thy erring tongue; 175

The sports of glory to the brave belong

(Retorts Euryalus): he boasts no claim

Among the great, unlike the sons of Fame.

A wandering merchant he frequents the main;

Some mean sea-farer in pursuit of gain; 180

Studious of freight, in naval trade well skill'd,

But dreads th' athletic labours of the field.

Incens'd Ulysses with a frown replies.

O forward to proclaim thy soul unwise!

With partial hands the Gods their gifts dispense; 185

Some greatly think, some speak with manly sense;

Here Heaven an elegance of form denies,

But wisdom the defect of form supplies:

This man with energy of thought controls,

And steals with modest violence our souls, 190

He speaks reserv'dly, but he speaks with force,

Nor can one word be chang'd but for a worse;

In publick more than mortal he appears,

And, as he moves, the gazing croud reveres.

While others, beauteous as th' ætherial kind, 195

The nobler portion want, a knowing mind.

In outward shew Heaven gives thee to excel,

But Heaven denies the praise of thinking well.

Ill bear the brave a rude ungovern'd tongue,

And, youth, my generous soul resents the wrong: 200

Skill'd in heroic exercise, I claim

A post of honour with the sons of Fame:

Such was my boast while vigour crown'd my days,
Now care surrounds me, and my force decays;
Inur'd a melancholy part to bear,

205

In scenes of death, by tempest and by war.
Yet, thus by woes impair'd, no more I wave
To prove the hero.—Slander stings the brave.

Then, striding forward with a furious bound,
He wrench'd a rocky fragment from the ground.
By far more ponderous, and more huge by far,
Than what Phæacia's sons discharg'd in air.

210

Fierce from his arm th' enormous load he flings,
Sonorous through the shaded air it sings;
Couch'd to the earth, tempestuous as it flies.

215

The croud gaze upward while it cleaves the skies.
Beyond all marks, with many a giddy round
Down rushing, it up-turns a hill of ground.

That instant Pallas, bursting from a cloud,
Fix'd a distinguish'd mark, and cry'd aloud:

220

Ev'n he who fightless wants his visual ray
May by his touch alone award the day:
Thy signal throw transcends the utmost bound
Of every champion by a length of ground.

Securely bid the strongest of the train
Arise to throw: the strongest throws in vain.

225

She spoke; and momentary mounts the sky:
The friendly voice Ulysses hears with joy;
Then thus aloud, (elate with decent pride)
Rise, ye Phæacians, try your force, he cried;
If with this throw the strongest casters vie,
Still, further still, I bid the discus fly,

230

Stand

Stand forth, ye champions, who the gauntlet wield,
 Or ye, the swiftest racers of the field!
 Stand forth, ye wrestlers, who these pastimes grace,
 I wield the gauntlet, and I run the race!
 In such heroic games I yield to none,
 Or yield to brave Laodamas alone:
 Shall I with brave Laodamas contend?
 A friend is sacred, and I stile him friend. 240
 Ungenerous were the man, and base of heart,
 Who takes the kind, and pays th' ungrateful part;
 Chiefly the man, in foreign realms confin'd,
 Base to his friend, to his own interest blind:
 All, all your heroes I this day defy; 245
 Give me a man that we our might may try.
 Expert in every art, I boast the skill
 To give the feather'd arrows wings to kill;
 Should a whole host at once discharge the bow,
 My well-aim'd shaft with death prevents the foe: 250
 Alone superior in the field of Troy,
 Great Philoctetes taught the shaft to fly.
 From all the sons of earth, unrival'd praise
 I justly claim; but yield to better days,
 To those fam'd days when great Alcides rose, 455
 And Eurytus, who bade the Gods be foes:
 (Vain Eurytus, whose art became his crime,
 Swept from the earth, he perish'd in his prime;
 Sudden th' irremeable way he trod,
 Who boldly durst defy the Bowyer-God). 260
 In fighting fields as far the spear I throw,
 As flies an arrow from the well-drawn bow.

Sole in the race the contest I decline,
 Stiff are my weary joints, and I resign;
 By storms and hunger worn: age well may fail, 265
 When storms and hunger both at once assail.

Abash'd, the numbers hear the god-like man,
 Till great Alcinous mildly thus began:

Well hast thou spoke, and well thy generous tongue
 With decent pride refutes a public wrong: 270

Warm are thy words, but warm without offence;
 Fear only fools, secure in men of sense:

Thy worth is known. Then hear our country's claim,
 And bear to heroes our heroic fames;

In distant realms our glorious deeds display, 275
 Repeat them frequent in the genial day;

When blest with ease thy woes and wanderings end,
 Teach them thy consort, bid thy sons attend!

How lov'd of Jove he crown'd our fires with praise,
 How we their offspring dignify our race. 280

Let other realms the deathful gauntlet wield,
 Or boast the glories of th' athletic field;

We in the course unrival'd speed display,
 Or through cærulean billows plough the way; 285

To dress, to dance, to sing, our sole delight,
 The feast or bath by day, and love by night:

Rise then, ye skill'd in measures; let him bear
 Your fame to men that breathe a distant air:

And faithful say, to you the powers belong
 To race, to sail, to dance, to chant the song. 290

But, herald, to the palace swift repair,
 And the soft lyre to grace our pastimes bear.

Swift at the word, obedient to the king,
 The herald flies the tuneful lyre to bring.
 Up rose nine seniors, chosen to survey 295
 The future games, the judges of the day.
 With instant care they mark a spacious round,
 And level for the dance th' allotted ground;
 The herald bears the lyre: intent to play,
 The bard advancing meditates the lay, 300
 Skill'd in the dance, tall youths, a blooming band,
 Graceful before the heavenly minstrel stand:
 Light-bounding from the earth, at once they rise,
 Their feet half viewless quiver in the skies:
 Ulysses gaz'd, astonish'd to survey 305
 The glancing splendours as their sandals play.
 Meantime the bard, alternate to the strings,
 The loves of Mars and Cytherea sings;
 How the stern God, enamour'd with her charms,
 Clasp'd the gay panting Goddess in his arms, 310
 By bribes seduc'd: and how the sun, whose eye
 Views the broad heavens, disclos'd the lawless joy.
 Stung to the soul, indignant through the skies
 To his black forge vindictive Vulcan flies:
 Arriv'd, his finewy arms incessant place 315
 Th' eternal anvil on the massy base.
 A wondrous net he labours, to betray
 The wanton lovers, as entwin'd they lay,
 Indissolubly strong! Then instant bears
 To his immortal dome the finish'd snares. 320
 Above, below, around, with art disspread,
 The sure inclosure folds the genial bed;

Whose texture ev'n the search of Gods deceives,
 Thin as the filmy threads the spider weaves.
 'Then, as withdrawing from the starry bowers, 325
 He feigns a journey to the Lemnian shores,
 His favourite isle! observant Mars descries
 His wish'd recess, and to the Goddess flies:
 He glows, he burns: the fair-hair'd Queen of Love
 Descends smooth gliding from the courts of Jove, 330
 Gay blooming in full charms: her hand he prest
 With eager joy, and with a sigh address:

Come, my belov'd, and taste the soft delights:
 Come, to repose the genial bed invites:
 Thy absent spouse, neglectful of thy charms, 335
 Prefers his barbarous Sintians to thy arms!

Then, nothing loth, th' enamour'd fair he led,
 And sunk transported on the conscious bed.
 Down rush'd the toils, inwrapping as they lay
 The careless lovers in their wanton play: 340
 In vain they strive, th' entangling snares deny
 (Inextricably firm) the power to fly:
 Warn'd by the God who sheds the golden day,
 Stern Vulcan homeward treads the starry way:
 Arriv'd, he sees, he grieves, with rage he burns: 345
 Full horrible he roars, his voice all heaven returns:

O Jove, he cry'd, oh all ye Powers above,
 See the lewd dalliance of the Queen of Love!
 Me, aukward me, she scorns; and yields her charms
 To that fair letcher, the strong God of arms. 350
 If I am lame, that stain my natal hour
 By Fate impos'd; such me my parent bore:

Why

Why was I born? See how the wanton lies!
 O fight tormenting to an husband's eyes!
 But yet I trust, this once ev'n Mars would fly 355
 His fair-one's arms—he thinks her, once, too nigh.
 But there remain, ye guilty, in my power,
 Till Jove refunds his shameless daughter's dower.
 Too dear I priz'd a fair enchanting face:
 Beauty unchaste is beauty in disgrace. 360

Meanwhile the Gods the dome of Vulcan throng,
 Apollo comes, and Neptune comes along;
 With these gay Hermes trod the starry plain;
 But modesty withheld the Goddesses-train.
 All Heaven beholds imprison'd as they lie, 365
 And unextinguish'd laughter shakes the sky.

Then mutual, thus they spoke: Behold on wrong
 Swift vengeance waits; and art subdues the strong!
 Dwells there a God on all th' Olympian brow
 More swift than Mars, and more than Vulcan slow?
 Yet Vulcan conquers, and the God of arms
 Must pay the penalty for lawless charms.

Thus serious they; but he who gilds the skies,
 The gay Apollo, thus to Hermes cries:
 Would'st thou enchain'd like Mars, O Hermes, lie,
 And bear the shame, like Mars, to share the joy?

O envy'd shame! (the smiling youth rejoin'd),
 Add thrice the chains, and thrice more firmly bind;
 Gaze all ye Gods, and every Goddess gaze,
 Yet eager would I bless the sweet disgrace, 380

Loud laugh the rest, even Neptune laugh'd aloud,
 Yet sues importunate to loose the God:

And

And free, he cries, O Vulcan! free from shame
Thy captives; I ensure the penal claim.

Will Neptune (Vulcan then) the faithless trust? 385
He suffers who gives surety for th' unjust:
But say, if that lewd scandal of the sky,
To liberty restor'd, perfidious fly;
Say, wilt thou bear the mulct? He instant cries,
The mulct I bear, if Mars perfidious flies. 390

To whom appeas'd: No more I urge delay;
When Neptune sues, my part is to obey.
Then to the ~~fires~~ his force the God applies;
They burst; and Mars to Thrace indignant flies:
To the soft Cyprian shores the Goddess moves, 395
To visit Paphos and her blooming groves;
Where to the Power an hundred altars rise,
And breathing odours scent the balmy skies;
Conceal'd she bathes in consecrated bowers,
The Graces unguents shed, ambrosial showers, 400
Unguents that charm the Gods! she last assumes
Her wondrous robes; and full the Goddess blooms.

Thus sung the bard: Ulysses hears with joy,
And loud applauses rend the vaulted sky.

Then to the sports his sons the king commands, 405
Each blooming youth before the monarch stands,
In dance unmatch'd! A wondrous ball is brought
(The work of Polypus, divinely wrought);
This youth with strength enormous bids it fly,
And bending backward whirls it to the sky; 410
His brother, springing with an active bound,
At distance intercepts it from the ground:

The ball dismiss'd, in dance they skim the strand,
Turn and return, and scarce imprint the sand.

Th' assembly gazes with astonish'd eyes, 415
And sends in shouts applauses to the skies.

Then thus Ulysses: Happy king, whose name
The brightest shines in all the rolls of Fame:

In subjects happy! with surprize I gaze!

Thy praise was just; their skill transcends thy praise. 420

Pleas'd with his people's fame, the monarch hears,
And thus benevolent accosts the peers:

Since Wisdom's sacred guidance he pursues,

Give to the stranger-guest a stranger's dues:

Twelve princes in our realm dominion share 425

O'er whom supreme, imperial power I bear:

Bring gold, a pledge of love; a talent bring,

A vest, a robe, and imitate your king:

Be swift to give; that he this night may share

The social feast of joy, with joy sincere. 430

And thou, Euryalus, redeem thy wrong;

A generous heart repairs a slanderous tongue.

Th' assenting peers, obedient to the king,

In haste their heralds send the gifts to bring.

Then thus Euryalus: O prince, whose sway 435

Rules this best realm, repentant I obey!

Be his this sword, whose blade of brass displays

A ruddy gleam; whose hilt a silver blaze;

Whose ivory sheath, inwrought with curious pride,

Adds graceful terror to the wearer's side. 440

He said; and to his hand the sword consign'd;

And if, he cry'd, my words affect thy mind,

Far

Far from thy mind those words, ye whirlwinds, bear,
 And scatter them, ye storms, in empty air:
 Crown, O ye Heavens! with joy his peaceful hours,
 And grant him to his spouse and native shores!

And blest be thou, my friend, Ulysses cries:
 Crown him with every joy, ye favouring skies:
 To thy calm hours continued peace afford,
 And never, never may'st thou want this sword! 450

He said; and o'er his shoulder slung the blade.
 Now o'er the earth ascends the evening shade:
 The precious gifts th' illustrious heralds bear,
 And to the court th' embody'd peers repair.
 Before the queen Alcinous' sons unfold 455
 The vests, the robes, and heaps of shining gold;
 'Then to the radiant thrones they move in state:
 Aloft, the king in pomp imperial fate.

Then to the queen: O partner of our reign,
 O sole belov'd! command thy menial train 460
 A polish'd chest and stately robes to bear,
 And healing waters for the bath prepare:
 That, bath'd, our guest may bid his sorrows cease,
 Hear the sweet song, and taste the feast in peace.
 A bowl that flames with gold, of wondrous frame, 465
 Ourself we give, memorial of our name:
 To raise in offerings to almighty Jove,
 And every God that treads the courts above.

Instant the queen, observant of the king,
 Commands her train a spacious vase to bring, 470
 The spacious vase with ample streams suffice,
 Heap high the wood, and bid the flames arise.

The flames climb round it with a fierce embrace,
 The fuming waters bubble o'er the blaze.
 Herself the chest prepares: in order roll'd 475
 The robes, the vests are rang'd, and heaps of gold:
 And adding a rich dress inwrought with art,
 A gift expressive of her bounteous heart,
 Thus spoke to Ithacus: To guard with bands
 Insolvable these gifts, thy care demands: 480
 Lest, in thy slumbers on the watery main,
 The hand of rapine make our bounty vain.

Then bending with full force, around he roll'd
 A labyrinth of bands in fold on fold,
 Clos'd with Circæan art. A train attends 485
 Around the bath: the bath the king ascends
 (Untasted joy, since that disastrous hour
 He sail'd ill-fated from Calypso's bower):
 Where, happy as the Gods that range the sky,
 He feasted every sense with every joy. 490
 He bathes; the damsels, with officious toil,
 Shed sweets, shed unguents, in a shower of oil:
 Then o'er his limbs a gorgeous robe he spreads,
 And to the feast magnificently treads,
 Full where the dome its shining valves expands, 495
 Nausicaa blooming as a Goddess stands,
 With wondering eyes the hero she survey'd,
 And graceful thus began the royal maid:

Hail, god-like stranger! and when Heaven restores
 To thy fond wish thy long-expected shores, 500
 This ever-grateful in remembrance bear,
 To me thou ow'st, to me, the vital air.

O royal

O royal Maid! Ulysses straight returns,
 Whose worth the splendors of thy race adorns,
 So may dread Jove (whose arm in vengeance forms
 The writhen bolt, and blackens heaven with storms,)
 Restore me safe, through weary wanderings tost,
 To my dear country's ever-pleasing coast,
 As, while the spirit in this bosom glows,
 To thee, my Goddess, I address my vows : 510
 My life, thy gift I boast! He said, and fate
 Fast by Alcinous on a throne of state.
 Now each partakes the feast, the wine prepares,
 Portions the food, and each his portion shares.
 The bard an herald guides: the gazing throng 515
 Pay low obeisance as he moves along:
 Beneath a sculptur'd arch he sits enthron'd,
 The peers encircling form an awful round.
 Then, from the chine, Ulysses carves with art
 Delicious food, an honorary part; 520
 This, let the master of the lyre receive,
 A pledge of love! 'tis all a wretch can give.
 Lives there a man beneath the spacious skies,
 Who sacred honours to the bard denies?
 The Muse the bard inspires, exalts his mind; 525
 The Muse indulgent loves th' harmonious kind.
 The herald to his hand the charge conveys,
 Not fond of flattery, nor unpleas'd with praise.
 When now the rage of hunger was allay'd,
 Thus to the Lyrift wife Ulysses said : 530
 Oh more than man! thy soul the Muse inspires,
 Or Phoebus animates with all his fires :

For who, by Phœbus uninform'd, could know
The woe of Greece, and sing so well the woe?
Just to the tale, as present at the fray,
Or taught the labours of the dreadful day!

535

The song recalls past horrors to my eyes,
And bids proud Ilion from her ashes rise.
Once more harmonious strike the sounding string,
Th' Epæan fabrick, fram'd by Pallas, sing:
How stern Ulysses, furious to destroy,
With latent heroes sack'd imperial Troy.

540

If faithful thou record the tale of Fame,
The God himself inspires thy breast with flame:
And mine shall be the task, henceforth to raise
In every land, thy monument of praise.

545

Full of the God, he rais'd his lofty strain,
How the Greeks rush'd tumultuous to the main:
How blazing tents illumin'd half the skies,
While from the shores the winged navy flies:
How, ev'n in Ilion's walls, in deathful bands,
Came the stern Greeks by Troy's assisting hands:
All Troy up-heav'd the steed; of differing mind,
Various the Trojans counsel'd; part consign'd
The monster to the sword, part sentence gave
To plunge it headlong in the whelming wave;
Th' unwise prevail, they lodge it in the towers,
An offering sacred to th' immortal Powers:
Th' unwise award to lodge it in the walls.
And by the Gods decree proud Ilion falls;
Destruction enters in the treacherous wood,
And vengeful slaughter, fierce for human blood.

550

555

560

He

He sung the Greeks stern issuing from the steed,
 How Ilium burns, how all her fathers bleed :
 How to thy dome, Deiphobus ! ascends
 The Spartan king : how Ithacus attends
 (Horrid as Mars), and how with dire alarms
 He fights, subdues : for Pallas strings his arms.

565

Thus while he sung, Ulysses' griefs renew,
 Tears bathe his cheeks, and tears the ground bedew :
 As some fond matron views in mortal fight
 Her husband falling in his country's right :
 Frantic through clashing swords she runs, she flies,
 As ghastly pale he groans, and faints, and dies ;
 Close to his breast she grovels on the ground,
 And bathes with floods of tears the gaping wound ;
 She cries, she shrieks ; the fierce insulting foe
 Relentless mock her violence of woe :

575

To chains condemn'd, as wildly she deploras ;
 A widow, and a slave on foreign shores.

580

So from the sluices of Ulysses' eyes
 Fast fell the tears, and sighs succeeded sighs :
 Conceal'd he griev'd : the king observ'd alone
 The silent tear, and heard the secret groan :
 Then to the bard aloud : O cease to sing,
 Dumb be thy voice, and mute the tuneful string :
 To every note his tears responsive flow,
 And his great heart heaves with tumultuous woe :
 Thy lay too deeply moves : then cease the lay,
 And o'er the banquet every heart be gay :
 This social right demands : for him the sails,
 Floating in air, invite th' impelling gales :

585

590

Iliis

His are the gifts of love: the wife and good
Receive the stranger as a brother's blood.

But, friend, discover faithful what I crave, 595
Artful concealment ill becomes the brave:

Say what thy birth, and what the name you bore,
Impos'd by parents in the natal hour?

(For from the natal hour distinctive names,
One common right, the great and lowly claims:) 600

Say from what city, from what regions tost,
And what inhabitants those regions boast?

So shalt thou instant reach the realms assign'd,
In wonderous ships self-mov'd, instinct with mind;

No helm secures their course, no pilot guides, 605
Like man, intelligent, they plough the tides,

Conscious of every coast, and every bay,
That lies beneath the sun's all-seeing ray;

Though clouds and darkness veil th' encumber'd sky,
Fearless through darkness and through clouds they fly:

Though tempests rage, though rolls the swelling main,
The seas may roll, the tempests rage in vain;

Ev'n the stern God, that o'er the waves presides,
Safe as they pass, and safe repass the tides,

With fury burns; while careless they convey 615
Promiscuous every guest to every bay.

These ears have heard my royal fire disclose
A dreadful story big with future woes,

How Neptune rag'd, and how, by his command,
Firm rooted in a surge a ship should stand 620

A monument of wrath: how mound on mound
Should bury these proud towers beneath the ground.

But this the Gods may frustrate or fulfill,
As suits the purpose of th' Eternal Will.
But say through what waste regions hast thou stray'd,
What customs noted, and what coasts survey'd;
Possess'd by wild barbarians fierce in arms,
Or men, whose bosom tender pity warms?
Say why the fate of Troy awak'd thy cares,
Why heav'd thy bosom, and why flow'd thy tears?
Just are the ways of Heaven: from Heaven proceed
The woes of man; Heaven doom'd the Greeks to bleed;
A theme of future song! Say then if slain
Some dear lov'd brother press'd the Phrygian plain?
Or bled some friend, who bore a brother's part, 635
And claim'd by merit, not by blood, the heart?

THE
NINTH BOOK

OF THE
ODYSSEY.

A R G U M E N T.

The Adventures of the Cicons, Lotophagi, and Cyclops.

ULYSSES begins the relation of his adventures; how, after the destruction of Troy, he with his companions made an incursion on the Cicons, by whom they were repulsed; and meeting with a storm, were driven to the coast of the Lotophagi. From thence they sailed to the land of the Cyclops, whose manners and situation are particularly characterised. The giant Polyphemus and his cave described; the usage Ulysses and his companions met with there; and lastly, the method and artifice by which he escaped.

T H E

O D Y S S E Y.

B O O K IX.

THEN thus Ulysses: Thou, whom first in fway,
 As first in virtue, these thy realms obey;
 How sweet the products of a peaceful reign!
 The heaven-taught poet, and enchanting strain;
 The well-fill'd palace, the perpetual feast, 5
 A land rejoicing, and a people blest!
 How goodly seems it ever to employ
 Man's social days in union and in joy;
 The plenteous board high-heap'd with cates divine,
 And o'er the foaming bowl the laughing wine! 10
 Admit these joys, why seeks thy mind to know
 Th' unhappy series of a wanderer's woe;
 Remembrance sad, whose image to review,
 Alas! must open all my wounds anew!
 And, oh! what first, what last shall I relate, 15
 Of woes unnumber'd sent by Heaven and Fate?
 Know first the man (though now a wretch distressed)
 Who hopes thee, monarch, for his future guest.
 Behold Ulysses! no ignoble name,
 Earth sounds my wisdom, and high heaven my fame,
 My native soil is Ithaca the fair,
 Where high Neritus waves his woods in air:
 Delichium, Samè, and Zacynthus crown'd
 With shady mountains, spread their isles around

(These to the north and night's dark regions run, 25
Those to Aurora and the rising sun).

Low lies our isle, yet blest in fruitful stores;
Strong are her sons, though rocky are her shores;
And none, ah! none so lovely to my sight,
Of all the lands that Heaven o'erspreads with light! 30
In vain Calypso long constrain'd my stay,
With sweet, reluctant, amorous delay;
With all her charms as vainly Circe strove,
And added magick, to secure my love.
In pomps or joys, the palace or the grot, 35
My country's image never was forgot,
My absent parents rose before my sight,
And distant lay contentment and delight.

Hear then the woes which mighty Jove ordain'd
To wait my passage from the Trojan land. 40
The winds from Ilion to the Cicons' shore,
Beneath cold Ismarus our vessels bore.
We boldly landed on the hostile place,
And sack'd the city, and destroy'd the race,
Their wives made captive, their possessions shar'd, 45
And every soldier found a like reward.
I then advis'd to fly; not so the rest,
Who stay'd to revel, and prolong the feast:
The fatted sheep and fable bulls they slay,
And bowls flow round, and riot wastes the day. 50
Meantime the Cicons to their holds retir'd,
Call on the Cicons with new fury fir'd;
With early morn the gather'd country swarms,
And all the continent is bright with arms;

Thick

Thick as the budding leaves or rising flowers 55
 O'erspread the land, when spring descends in showers :
 All expert soldiers, skill'd on foot to dare,
 Or from the bounding courser urge the war.
 Now fortune changes (so the Fates ordain) ;
 Our hour was come to taste our share of pain. 60
 Close at the ships the bloody fight began,
 Wounded they wound, and man expires on man.
 Long as the morning sun increasing bright
 O'er heaven's pure azure spread the growing light,
 Promiscuous death the form of war confounds, 65
 Each adverse battle gor'd with equal wounds :
 But when his evening wheels o'erhung the main,
 Then conquest crown'd the fierce Ciconian train.
 Six brave companions from each ship we lost,
 The rest escape in haste, and quit the coast. 70
 With sails outspread we fly th' unequal strife,
 Sad for their loss, but joyful of our life,
 Yet as we fled our fellows rites we paid,
 And thrice we call'd on each unhappy shade.

Meanwhile the God whose hand the thunder forms,
 Drives clouds on clouds, and blackens Heaven with
 storms !

Wide o'er the waste the rage of Boreas sweeps,
 And night rush'd headlong on the shaded deeps.
 Now here, now there, the giddy ships are borne,
 And all the rattling shrouds in fragments torn. 80
 We furl'd the sail, we ply'd the labouring oar,
 Took down our masts, and row'd our ships to shore.

Two tedious days and two long nights we lay,
 O'erwatch'd and batter'd in the naked bay.
 But the third morning when Aurora brings,
 We rear the masts, we spread the canvas wings;
 Refresh'd, and careless on the deck reclin'd,
 We sit, and trust the pilot and the wind.
 Then to my native country had I fail'd :
 But the' cape doubled, adverse winds prevail'd.
 Strong was the tide, which, by the northern blast
 Impell'd, our vessels on Cythera cast.
 Nine days our fleet th' uncertain tempest bore
 Far in wide ocean, and from sight of shore ;
 The tenth we touch'd, by various errors tost,
 The land of Lotos and the flowery coast.
 We climb the beach, and springs of water found,
 Then spread our hasty banquet on the ground.
 Three men were sent deputed from the crew,
 (An herald one) the dubious coast to view,
 And learn what habitants possess the place.
 They went, and found a hospitable race ;
 Not prone to ill, nor strange to foreign guest,
 They eat, they drink, and nature gives the feast ;
 The trees around them all their fruit produce ;
 Lotos, the name ; divine, nectareous juice !
 (Thence call'd Lotophagi) which whoso tastes,
 Insatiate riots in the sweet repasts,
 Nor other home, nor other care intends,
 But quits his house, his country, and his friends :
 The three we sent, from off th' enchanting ground
 We dragg'd reluctant, and by force we bound :

The rest in haste forsook the pleasing shore,
Or, the charm tasted, had return'd no more.
Now plac'd in order on their banks, they sweep 115
The seas smooth face, and cleave the hoary deep;
With heavy hearts we labour through the tide
To coasts unknown, and oceans yet untry'd.

The land of Cyclops first; a savage kind,
Nor tam'd by manners, nor by laws confin'd : 120
Untaught to plant, to turn the glebe and sow;
They all their products to free nature owe.

The soil untill'd a ready harvest yields,
With wheat and barley wave the golden fields,
Spontaneous wines from weighty clusters pour, 125
And Jove descends in each prolific shower.

By these no statutes and no rights are known,
No council held, no monarch fills the throne,
But high on hills, or airy cliffs they dwell,
Or deep in caves whose entrance leads to hell. 130
Each rules his race, his neighbour not his care,
Heedless of others, to his own severe.

Oppos'd to the Cyclopean coasts, there lay
An isle, whose hills their subject fields survey;
Its name Lachæa, crown'd with many a grove, 135
Where savage goats through pathless thickets rove:

No needy mortals here, with hunger bold,
Or wretched hunters, through the wintry cold
Pursue their flight: but leave them safe to bound
From hill to hill, o'er all the desert ground. 140

Nor knows the soil to feed the fleecy care,
Or feels the labours of the crooked share;
But

But uninhabited, untill'd, unfown
 It lies, and breeds the bleating goat alone.
 For there no vessel with vermillion prore,
 Or bark of traffick glides from shore to shore;
 The rugged race of savages, unskill'd
 The seas to traverse, or the ships to build,
 Gaze on the coast, nor cultivate the soil;
 Unlearn'd in all th' industrious arts of toil.
 Yet here all products and all plants abound,
 Sprung from the fruitful genius of the ground;
 Fields waving high with heavy crops are seen,
 And vines that flourish in eternal green,
 Refreshing meads along the murmuring main,
 And fountains streaming down the fruitful plain.
 A port there is, inclos'd on either side,
 Where ships may rest, unanchor'd and unty'd;
 Till the glad mariners incline to sail,
 And the sea whitens with the rising gale.
 High at its head, from out the cavern'd rock
 In living rills a gushing fountain broke:
 Around it, and above, for ever green,
 The blushing alders form a shady scene.
 Hither some favouring God, beyond our thought,
 Through all-surrounding shade our navy brought;
 For gloomy night descended on the main,
 Nor glimmer'd Phœbe in th' ethereal plain:
 But all unseen the clouded island lay,
 And all unseen the surge and rolling sea,
 Till safe we anchor'd in the shelter'd bay:
 Our sails we gather'd, cast our cables o'er,
 And slept secure along the sandy shore.

Soon as again the rosy morning shone,
Reveal'd the landscape and the scene unknown, 175
With wonder seiz'd, we view the pleasing ground,
And walk delighted, and expatiate round.

Rouz'd by the woodland nymphs, at early dawn,
The mountain goats came bounding o'er the lawn :
In haste our fellows to the ships repair, 180

For arms and weapons of the sylvan war ;
Straight in three squadrons all our crew we part,
And bend the bow, or wing the missile dart ;
The bounteous Gods afford a copious prey,
And nine fat goats each vessel bears away : 185

The royal bark had ten. Our ships complete
We thus supply'd (for twelve were all the fleet).
Here, till the setting sun roll'd down the light,
We sat indulging in the genial rite :

Nor wines were wanting ; those from ample jars 190
We drain'd, the prize of our Ciconian wars.

The land of Cyclops lay in prospect near ;
The voice of goats and bleating flocks we hear,
And from their mountains rising smokes appear, }
Now sunk the sun, and darkness cover'd o'er 195

The face of things : along the sea-beat shore
Sate we sleep : but when the sacred dawn
Arising glitter'd o'er the dewy lawn,
I call'd my fellows, and these words address :

My dear associates, here indulge your rest : 200
While, with my single ship, adventurous I
Go forth, the manners of yon men to try ;
Whether a race unjust, of barbarous might,
Rude, and unconscious of a stranger's right ;

Or

POPE'S HOMER.

Or such who harbour pity in their breast,
Revere the Gods, and succour the distressed? 205

'This said, I climb'd my vessel's lofty side;
My train obey'd me, and the ship unty'd.
In order seated on their banks, they sweep
Neptune's smooth face, and cleave the yielding deep.
When to the nearest verge of land we drew,
Fast by the sea a lonely cave we view,
High, and with darkening laurels cover'd o'er;
Where sheep and goats lay slumbering round the shore.
Near this, a fence of marble from the rock, 215
Brown with o'er-arching pine and spreading oak.
A giant shepherd here his flock maintains
Far from the rest, and solitary reigns,
In shelter thick of horrid shade reclin'd;
And gloomy mischiefs labour in his mind. 220

A form enormous! far unlike the race
Of human birth, in stature, or in face;
As some lone mountain's monstrous growth he stood,
Crown'd with rough thickets, and a nodding wood.
I left my vessel at the point of land, 225
And close to guard it, gave our crew command:
With only twelve, the boldest and the best,
I seek th' adventure, and forsake the rest.

Then took a goatskin fill'd with precious wine,
The gift of Maron of Evantheus' line 230 }
(The priest of Phœbus at th' Isinarian shrine).
In sacred shade his honour'd mansion stood
Amidst Apollo's consecrated wood;
Him, and his house, Heaven mov'd my mind to save,
And costly presents in return he gave; 235

Seven golden talents to perfection wrought,
 A silver bowl that held a copious draught,
 And twelve large vessels of unmingled wine,
 Mellifluous, undecaying, and divine!
 Which now, some ages from his race conceal'd, 240
 The hoary fire in gratitude reveal'd;
 Such was the wine: to quench whose fervent steam,
 Scarce twenty measures from the living stream
 To cool one cup suffic'd: the goblet crown'd
 Breath'd aromatic fragrancies around. 245
 Of this an ample vase we heav'd aboard,
 And brought another with provisions stor'd.
 My soul foreboded I should find the bower
 Of some fell Monster, fierce with barbarous power,
 Some rustic wretch, who liv'd in Heaven's despight,
 Contemning laws, and trampling on the right.
 The cave we found, but vacant all within
 (His flock the giant tended on the green):
 But round the grot we gaze; and all we view,
 In order rang'd, our admiration drew: 255
 The bending shelves with loads of cheeses prest,
 The folded flocks each separate from the rest
 (The larger here, and there the lesser lambs,
 The new-fall'n young here bleating for their dams;
 The kid distinguish'd from the lambkin lies): 260
 The cavern echoes with responsive cries.
 Capacious chargers all around were laid,
 Full pails, and vessels of the milking trade.
 With fresh provisions hence our fleet to store
 My friends advise me, and to quit the shore; 265
 Or

Or drive a flock of sheep and goats away,
 Consult our safety, and put off to sea.
 Their wholesome counsel rashly I declin'd,
 Curious to view the man of monstrous kind,
 And try what social rites a savage lends:
 Dire rites, alas! and fatal to my friends!

270

Then first a fire we kindle, and prepare
 For his return with sacrifice and prayer.
 The loaded shelves afford us full repast;
 We sit expecting. Lo! he comes at last.
 Near half a forest on his back he bore,
 And cast the ponderous burden at the door.
 It thunder'd as it fell. We trembled then,
 And sought the deep recesses of the den.
 Now driven before him, through the arching rock, 280
 Came tumbling, heaps on heaps, th' unnumber'd flock:
 Big-udder'd ewes, and goats of female kind
 (The males were penn'd in outward courts behind):
 Then, heav'd on high, a rock's enormous weight
 To the cave's mouth he roll'd, and clos'd the gate 285
 (Scarce twenty-four wheel'd cars, compact and strong,
 The massy load could bear, or roll along).
 He next betakes him to his evening cares,
 And, sitting down, to milk his flocks prepares;
 Of half their udders eases first the dams,
 Then to the mother's teats submits the lambs.
 Half the white stream to hardening cheese he prest,
 And high in wicker-baskets heap'd: the rest,
 Reserv'd in bowls, supply'd the nightly feast.

275

290

His

His labour done, he fir'd the pile, that gave
A sudden blaze, and lighted all the cave. 295

We stand discover'd by the rising fires;
Askance the giant glares, and thus inquires:

What are ye, guests; on what adventure, say,
Thus far ye wander through the watery way? 300
Pirates perhaps, who seek through seas unknown
The lives of others, and expose your own?

His voice like thunder through the cavern sounds:
My bold companions thrilling fear confounds,
Appall'd at sight of more than mortal man! 305
At length, with heart recover'd, I began:

From Troy's fam'd fields, sad wanderers o'er the
Behold the relicks of the Grecian train! [main,

Through various seas by various perils tost,
And forc'd by storms, unwilling, on your coast; 310

Far from our destin'd course and native land,
Such was our fate, and such high Jove's command!

Nor what we are befits us to disclaim,
Atrides' friends, (in arms a mighty name)
Who taught proud Troy and all her sons to bow; 315
Victors of late, but humble suppliants now!

Low at thy knee thy succour we implore;
Respect us, human, and relieve us, poor.
At least some hospitable gift bestow;
'Tis what the happy to th' unhappy owe: 320

'Tis what the Gods require: those Gods revere,
The poor and stranger are their constant care;
To Jove their cause, and their revenge belongs,
He wanders with them, and he feels their wrongs.

Foolt

Fools that ye are! (the savage thus replies, 325
 His inward fury blazing at his eyes)
 Or strangers, distant far from our abodes,
 To bid me reverence or regard the Gods.
 Know then, we, Cyclops, are a race above
 Those air-bred people, and their goat-nurs'd Jove: 330
 And learn, our power proceeds with thee and thine,
 Not as he wills, but as ourselves incline.
 But answer, the good ship that brought ye o'er,
 Where lies she anchor'd? near or off the shore?

Thus he. His meditated fraud I find 335
 (Vers'd in the turns of various human kind);
 And, cautious, thus: Against a dreadful rock,
 Fast by your shore the gallant vessel broke,
 Scarce with these few I 'scap'd; of all my train,
 Whom angry Neptune whelm'd beneath the main;
 The scatter'd wreck the winds blew back again. }

He answer'd with his deed. His bloody hand
 Snatch'd two, unhappy! of my martial band;
 And dash'd like dogs against the stoney floor:
 The pavement swims with brains and mingled gore.
 Torn limb from limb, he spreads his horrid feast,
 And fierce devours it like a mountain-beast:
 He sucks the marrow, and the blood he drains,
 Nor entrails, flesh, nor solid bone remains.
 We see the death from which we cannot move, 350
 And humbled groan beneath the hand of Jove.
 His ample maw with human carnage fill'd,
 A milky deluge next the giant swill'd;
 Then stretch'd in length o'er half the cavern'd rock,
 Lay senseless, and supine, amidst the flock. 355

To seize the time, and with a sudden wound
 To fix the slumbering monster to the ground,
 My soul impels me; and in act I stand
 To draw the sword; but wisdom held my hand.
 A deed so rash had finish'd all our fate, 360
 No mortal forces from the lofty gate
 Cold roll the rock. In hopeless grief we lay,
 And sigh, expecting the return of day.
 Now did the rosy-finger'd morn arise,
 And shed her sacred light along the skies. 365
 He wakes, he lights the fire, he milks the dams,
 And to the mother's teats submits the lambs.
 The task thus finish'd of his morning hours,
 Two more he snatches, murders, and devours.
 Then pleas'd, and whistling, drives his flock before:
 Removes the rocky mountain from the door,
 And shuts again: with equal ease dispos'd,
 As a light quiver's lid is op'd and clos'd.
 His giant voice the echoing region fills:
 His flocks, obedient, spread o'er all the hills. 375
 Thus left behind, ev'n in the last despair
 I thought, devis'd, and Pallas heard my prayer.
 Revenge, and doubt, and caution work'd my breast;
 But this of many counsels seem'd the best:
 The monster's club within the cave I 'spy'd, 380
 A tree of stateliest growth, and yet undry'd,
 Green from the wood; of height and bulk so vast,
 The largest ship might claim it for a mast.
 This shorten'd of its top, I gave my train
 A fathom's length, to shape it and to plane; 385
 Vol. L. R The

The narrower end I sharpen'd to a spire;
 Whose point we harden'd with the force of fire,
 And hid it in the dust that strew'd the cave.
 Then to my few companions, bold and brave,
 Propos'd, who first the venturous deed should try, 390
 In the broad orbit of his monstrous eye
 To plunge the brand, and twirl the pointed wood,
 When slumber next should tame the man of blood.
 Just as I wish'd, the lots were cast on four:
 Myself the fifth. We stand, and wait the hour. 395
 He comes with evening: all his fleecy flock
 Before him march, and pour into the rock:
 Not one, or male or female stay'd behind
 (So fortune chanc'd, or so some God design'd);
 Then heaving high the stone's unwieldy weight, 400
 He roll'd it on the cave, and clos'd the gate.
 First down he sits, to milk the woolly dams,
 And then permits their udder to the lambs.
 Next seiz'd two wretches more, and headlong cast,
 Brain'd on the rock; his second dire repast. 405
 I then approach'd him reeking with their gore.
 And held the brimming goblet foaming o'er;
 Cyclop! since human flesh has been thy feast,
 Now drain this goblet, potent to digest;
 Know hence what treasures in our ship we lost, 410
 And what rich liquors other climates boast.
 We to thy shore the precious freight shall bear,
 If home thou send us, and vouchsafe to spare,
 But oh! thus furious, thirsting thus for gore,
 The sons of men shall ne'er approach thy shore, 415 }
 And never shalt thou taste this nectar more.

He heard, he took, and, pouring down his throat
 Delighted, swill'd the large luxurious draught.
 More! give me more, he cry'd: the boon be thine,
 Whoe'er thou art that bear'st celestial wine! 420

Declare thy name; not mortal is this juice,
 Such as th' unblest Cyclopean climes produce
 (Though sure our vine the largest cluster yields.
 And Jove's scorn'd thunder serves to drench our fields);
 But this descended from the blest abodes, 425
 A rill of nectar, streaming from the Gods.

He said, and greedy grasp'd the heady bowl,
 Thrice drain'd, and pour'd the deluge on his soul.
 His sense lay cover'd with the dozy fume;
 While thus my fraudulent speech I reassume: 430
 Thy promis'd boon, O Cyclop! now I claim,
 And plead my title; Noman is my name.
 By that distinguish'd from my tender years,
 'Tis what my parents call me, and my peers.

The giant then: Our promis'd grace receive, 435
 The hospitable boon we mean to give:
 When all thy wretched crew have felt my power,
 Noman shall be the last I will devour.

He said: then, nodding with the fumes of wine,
 Dropp'd his huge head, and snoring lay supine. 440
 His neck obliquely o'er his shoulders hung,
 Press'd with the weight of sleep that tames the strong!
 There belch'd the mingled streams of wine and blood,
 And human flesh, his indigested food.

Sudden I stir the embers, and inspire 445
 With animating breath the seeds of fire;

Each drooping spirit with bold words repair,
 And urge my train the dreadful deed to dare.
 The stake now glow'd beneath the burning bed
 (Green as it was) and sparkled fiery red. 450
 Then forth the vengeful instrument I bring;
 With beating hearts my fellows form a ring.
 Urg'd by some present God, they swift let fall
 The pointed torment on his visual ball.
 Myself above them from a rising ground 455
 Guide the sharp stake, and twirl it round and round.
 As when a shipwright stands his workmen o'er,
 Who ply the wimble, some huge beam to bore;
 Urg'd on all hands, it nimbly spins about,
 The grain deep-piercing till it scoops it out: 460
 In his broad eye so whirls the fiery wood;
 From the pierc'd pupil spouts the boiling blood;
 Sing'd are his brows; the scorching lids grow black;
 The jelly bubbles, and the fibres crack.
 And as when armourers temper in the ford 465
 The keen-edg'd pole-ax, or the shining sword,
 The red-hot metal hisses in the lake,
 Thus in his eye-ball his'd the plunging stake.
 He sends a dreadful groan: the rocks around
 Through all their inmost winding caves resound. 470
 Scar'd we receded. Forth, with frantic hand,
 He tore, and dash'd on earth the gory brand:
 Then calls the Cyclops, all that round him dwell,
 With voice like thunder, and a direful yell.
 From all their dens the one-ey'd race repair, 475
 From rifted rocks and mountains bleak in air.

All haste assembled, at his well-known roar,
Enquire the cause, and croud the cavern-door.

What hurts thee, Polypheme? what strange affright
Thus breaks our slumbers, and disturbs the night? 480
Does any mortal, in th' unguarded hour

Of sleep, oppresses thee, or by fraud or power?
Or thieves insidious the fair flock surprize?

Thus they: the Cyclop from his den replies:

Friends, Noman kills me; Noman in the hour 485
Of sleep, oppresses me with fraudulent power.

"If no man hurt thee, but the hand divine

"Inflit disease, it fits thee to resign:

"To Jove or to thy father Neptune pray,"

The brethren cry'd, and instant strode away. 490

Joy touch'd my secret soul and conscious heart,
Pleas'd with th' effect of conduct and of art.

Meantime the Cyclop, raging with his wound,
Spreads his wide arms, and searches round and round:

At last, the stone removing from the gate, 495

With hands extended in the midst he fate:

And search'd each passing sheep, and felt it o'er,

Secure to seize us ere we reach'd the door

(Such as his shallow wit he deem'd was mine):

But secret I revolv'd the deep design; 500

'Twas for our lives my labouring bosom wrought;

Each scheme I turn'd, and sharpen'd every thought;

This way and that I cast to save my friends,

Till one resolve my varying counsel ends.

Strong were the rams, with native purple fair, 505

Well fed, and largest of the fleecy care.

These three and three, with ozier bands we ty'd
 (The twining bands the Cyclop's bed supply'd)
 The midmost bore a man : the outward two
 Secur'd each side : so bound we all the crew. 510
 One ram remain'd, the leader of the flock ;
 In his deep fleece my grasping hands I lock,
 And fast beneath, in woolly curls inwove,
 I cling implicit, and confide in Jove.
 When rosy morning glimmer'd o'er the dales, 515
 He drove to pasture all the lusty males :
 The ewes still folded, with distended thighs
 Unmilk'd, lay bleating in distressful cries.
 But heedless of those cares, with anguish stung.
 He felt their fleeces as they pass'd along, 520
 (Fool that he was) and let them safely go,
 All unsuspecting of their freight below.

The master ram at last approach'd the gate,
 Charg'd with his wool, and with Ulysses fate.
 Him while he past the monster blind bespoke : 525
 What makes my ram the lag of all the flock ?
 First thou wert wont to crop the flowery mead,
 First to the field and river's bank to lead,
 And first with stately step at evening hour
 Thy fleecy fellows usher to their bower. 530
 Now far the last, with pensive pace and slow
 Thou mov'st, as conscious of thy master's woe !
 Seest thou these lids that now unfold in vain ?
 (The deed of Noman and his wicked train !)
 Oh ! didst thou feel for thy afflicted lord, 535
 And would but Fate the power of speech afford,

Soon

Soon might'st thou tell me, where in secret here
The dastard lurks, all trembling with his fear :
Swung round and round, and dash'd from rock to rock,
His batter'd brains should on the pavement smoke. 540
No ease, no pleasure, my sad heart receives,
While such a monster as vile Noman lives.

The giant spoke, and through the hollow rock
Dismiss'd the ram, the father of the flock.
No sooner freed, and through th' inclosure past, 545
First I release myself, my fellows last :
Fat sheep and goats in throngs we drive before,
And reach our vessel on the winding shore.
With joy the sailors view their friends return'd,
And hail us living whom as dead they mourn'd. 550
Big tears of transport stand in every eye :
I check their fondness, and command to fly.
Aboard in haste they heave the wealthy sheep,
And snatch their oars, and rush into the deep.
Now off at sea, and from the shallows clear, 555
As far as human voice could reach the ear :
With taunts the distant giant I accost :
Hear me, O Cyclop ! hear, ungracious host !
'Twas on no coward, no ignoble slave.
Thou meditat'st thy meal in yonder cave ; 560
But one, the vengeance fated from above
Doom'd to inflict ; the instrument of Jove.
Thy barbarous breach of hospitable bands,
The God, the God revenges by my hands.

The words the Cyclop's burning rage provoke : 565
From the tall hill he rends a pointed rock,

High o'er the billows flew the massy load,
 And near the ship came thundering on the flood.
 It almost brush'd the helm, and fell before:
 The whole sea shook, and reflux beat the shore. 570
 The long concussion on the heaving tide
 Roll'd back the vessel to the island's side:
 Again I shov'd her off, our fate to fly,
 Each nerve we stretch, and every oar we ply.
 Just 'scap'd impending death, when now again 575
 We twice as far had furrow'd back the main,
 Once more I rais'd my voice; my friends afraid
 With mild entreaties my design dissuade,
 What boots the god-less giant to provoke,
 Whose arms may sink us at a single stroke? 580
 Already, when the dreadful rock he threw,
 Old ocean shook, and back his surges flew,
 Thy founding voice directs his aim again;
 The rock o'erwhelms us, and we 'scap'd in vain.

But I, of mind elate, and scorning fear, 585
 Thus with new taunts insult the monster's ear.
 Cyclop! if any, pitying thy disgrace,
 Ask who disfigur'd thus that eyeless face?
 Say 'twas Ulysses, 'twas his deed, declare,
 Laertes' son, of Ithaca the fair; 590
 Ulysses, far in fighting fields renown'd,
 Before whose arm Troy tumbled to the ground.

Th' astonish'd savage with a roar replies:
 O heavens! O faith of ancient prophecies!
 This, Telemus Eurymedes foretold, 595
 (The mighty seer who on these hills grew old;

Skill'd

Skill'd the dark fates of mortals to declare,
And learn'd in all wing'd omens of the air)
Long since he menac'd, such was Fate's command;
And nam'd Ulysses as the destin'd hand. 600

I deem'd some god-like giant to behold,
Or lofty hero, haughty, brave, and bold;
Not this weak pigmy-wretch, of mean design,
Who not by strength subdued me, but by wine.
But come, accept our gifts, and join to pray 605
Great Neptune's blessing on the watery way:

For his I am, and I the lineage own:
Th' immortal father no less boasts the son.
His power can heal me, and re-light my eye:
And only his, of all the Gods on high. 610

Oh! could this arm (I thus aloud rejoin'd)
From that vast bulk dislodge thy bloody mind,
And send thee howling to the realms of night!
As sure, as Neptune cannot give thee fight.

Thus I: while raging he repeats his cries, 615
With hands uplifted to the starry skies:
Hear me, O Neptune! thou whose arms are hurl'd
From shore to shore, and gird the solid world.

If thine I am, nor thou my birth disown,
And if th' unhappy Cyclop be thy son; 620
Let not Ulysses breathe his native air,
Laertes' son, of Ithaca the fair.

If to review his country be his fate,
Be it through toils and sufferings long and late;
His lost companions let him first deplore; 625
Some vessel, not his own, transport him o'er;
And when at home from foreign sufferings freed,
More near and deep, domestic woes succeed!

With

With imprecations thus he fill'd the air,
 And angry Neptune heard the unrighteous prayer. 630
 A larger rock then heaving from the plain,
 He whirl'd it round: it fung across the main:
 It fell, and brush'd the stern: the billows roar,
 Shake at the weight, and reflux beat the shore.
 With all our force we kept aloof to sea, 635
 And gain'd the island where our vessels lay.
 Our fight the whole collected navy cheer'd,
 Who, waiting long, by turns had hop'd and fear'd.
 There disembarking on the green sea-side,
 We land our cattle, and the spoil divide: 640
 Of these due shares to every sailor fall;
 The master ram was voted mine by all:
 And him (the guardian of Ulysses' fate)
 With pious mind to Heaven I consecrate.
 But the great God, whose thunder rends the skies, 645
 Averse, beholds the smoking sacrifice;
 And sees me wandering still from coast to coast,
 And all my vessels, all my people, lost!
 While thoughtless we indulge the genial rite,
 As plenteous cates and flowing bowls invite; 650
 Till evening Phœbus roll'd away the light:
 Stretch'd on the shore in careless ease we rest,
 Till ruddy morning purpled o'er the east.
 Then from their anchors all our ships unbind,
 And mount the decks, and call the willing wind. 655
 Now, rang'd in order on our banks, we sweep
 With hasty strokes the hoarse resounding deep;
 Blind to the future, pensive with our fears,
 Glad for the living, for the dead in tears.

THE
TENTH BOOK
OF THE
ODYSSEY.

A R G U M E N T.

Adventures with Æolus, the Lestrigons, and Circe.

ULYSSES arrives at the island of Æolus, who gives him prosperous winds, and incloses the adverse ones in a bag, which his companions untying, they are driven back again, and rejected. Then they sail to the Lestrigons, where they lose eleven ships, and, with one only remaining, proceed to the island of Circe. Eurylochus is sent first with some companions, all which, except Eurylochus, are transformed into swine. Ulysses then undertakes the adventure, and, by the help of Mercury, who gives him the herb Moly, overcomes the enchantress, and procures the restoration of his men. After a year's stay with her, he prepares at her instigation for his voyage to the infernal shades.

THE
O D Y S S E Y.
B O O K X.

AT length we reach'd Æolia's sea-girt shore
 Where great Hipprotades the sceptre bore,
 A floating isle! High-rais'd by toil divine,
 Strong walls of brass the rocky coast confine.
 Six blooming youths, in private grandeur bred, 5
 And six fair daughters grac'd the royal bed :
 These sons their sisters wed, and all remain
 Their parents pride, and pleasure of their reign.
 All day they feast, all day the bowls flow round,
 And joy and musick through the isle resound : 10
 At night each pair on splendid carpets lay,
 And crown'd with love the pleasures of the day.
 This happy port affords our wandering fleet
 A month's reception, and a safe retreat.
 Full oft the monarch urg'd me to relate 15
 The fall of Ilion, and the Grecian fate;
 Full oft I told : at length for parting mov'd;
 The king with mighty gifts my suit approv'd.
 The adverse winds in leathern bags he brac'd,
 Compress'd their force, and lock'd each struggling blast:
 For him the mighty Sire of Gods assign'd
 The tempest's Lord, the tyrant of the wind;
His

His word alone the listening storms obey,
 To smooth the deep, or swell the foamy sea.
 These in my hollow ship the monarch hung,
 Securely fetter'd by a silver thong;
 But Zephyrus exempt, with friendly gales
 He charg'd to fill, and guide the swelling sails:
 Rare gift! but oh, what gift to fools avails!

25

}

Nine prosperous days we ply'd the labouring oar; 30
 'The tenth presents our welcome native shore:
 The hills display the beacon's friendly light,
 And rising mountains gain upon our sight.
 Then first my eyes, by watchful toils oppress'd,
 Comply'd to take the balmy gifts of rest;
 Then first my hands did from the rudder part
 (So much the love of home possess'd my heart);
 When, lo! on board a fond debate arose;
 What rare device those vessels might enclose?
 What sum, what prize from Æolus I brought? 40
 Whilst to his neighbour each express'd his thought:

35

40

Say, whence, ye Gods, contending nations strive
 Who most shall please, who most our hero give?
 Long have his coffers groan'd with Trojan spoils;
 Whilst we, the wretched partners of his toils, 45
 Reproach'd by want, our fruitless labours mourn,
 And only rich in barren fame return.
 Now Æolus, ye see, augments his store:
 But come, my friends, these mystic gifts explore.
 They said: and (oh curst fate) the thongs unbound:
 The gushing tempest sweeps the ocean round;
 Snatch'd in the whirl, the hurry'd navy flew,
 The ocean widen'd, and the shores withdrew.

Rouz'd

Rous'd from my fatal sleep, I long debate
If still to live, or desperate plunge to Fate: 55

Thus, doubting, prostrate on the deck I lay,
Till all the coward thoughts of death gave way.

Meanwhile our vessels plough the liquid plain,
And soon the known Æolian coast regain,
Our groans the rocks remurmur'd to the main. 60

We leap'd on shore, and with a scanty feast
Our thirst and hunger hastily repress'd;
That done, two chosen heralds straight attend
Our second progress to my royal friend:
And him amidst his jovial sons we found; 65

The banquet steaming, and the goblets crown'd:
There humbly stopp'd with conscious shame and awe,
Nor nearer than the gate presum'd to draw.

But soon his sons their well-known guest descry'd,
And starting from their couches loudly cry'd: 70

Ulysses here! what dæmon could'st thou meet
To thwart thy passage, and repel thy fleet?
Wast thou not furnish'd by our choicest care
For Greece, for home, and all thy soul held dear!

Thus they; in silence long my fate I mourn'd, 75
At length these words with accent low return'd:

Me, lock'd in sleep, my faithless crew bereft
Of all the blessings of your god-like gift!

But grant, oh grant our loss we may retrieve:
A favour you, and you alone can give. 80

Thus I with art to move their pity try'd,
And touch'd the youths; but their stern fire reply'd:
Vile wretch, begone! this instant I command
Thy fleet accurs'd to leave our hallow'd land.

His

His baneful suit pollutes these blest'd abodes,
Whose fate proclaims him hateful to the Gods.

85

Thus fierce he said: we fighting went our way,
And with desponding hearts put off to sea.

The sailors, spent with toils, their folly mourn,
But mourn in vain; no prospect of return.

90

Six days and nights a doubtful course we steer,
The next proud Lamos' stately towers appear,
And Læstrigonia's gates arise distinct in air.

}

The shepherd, quitting here at night the plain,
Calls, to succeed his cares, the watchful swain;
But he that scorns the chains of sleep to wear,
And adds the herdsman's to the shepherd's care,
So near the pastures, and so short the way,
His double toils may claim a double pay,
And join the labours of the night and day.

95

100

Within a long recess a bay there lies,
Edg'd round with cliffs, high pointing to the skies;
The jutting shores that swell on either side
Contract its mouth, and break the rushing tide.

Our eager sailors seize the fair retreat,
And bound within the port their crowded fleet;
For here retir'd the sinking billows sleep,
And smiling calmness silver'd o'er the deep.

105

I only in the bay refus'd to moor,
And fix'd, without, my halbers to the shore.

110

From thence we climb'd a point, whose airy brow
Commands the prospect of the plains below:
No tracts of beasts, or signs of men, we found,
But smoky volumes rolling from the ground.

Two

Two with our herald thither we command, 115

With speed to learn what men possess'd the land.

They went, and kept the wheel's smooth beaten road

Which to the city drew the mountain wood ;

When lo ! they met, beside a crystal spring,

The daughter of Antiphates the king ; 120

She to Artacia's silver streams came down

(Artacia's streams alone supply the town) :

The damsel they approach'd, and ask'd what race

The people were ? who monarch of the place ?

With joy the maid th' unwary strangers heard, 125

And shew'd them where the royal dome appear'd.

They went ; but, as they entering saw the queen

Of size enormous, and terrific mien

(Not yielding to some bulky mountain's height),

A sudden horror struck their aking fight. 130

Swift at her call her husband scour'd away

To wreak his hunger on the destin'd prey ;

One for his food the raging glutton slew,

But two rush'd out, and to the navy flew.

Balk'd of his prey, the yelling monster flies, 135

And fills the city with his hideous cries ;

A ghastly band of giants hear the roar,

And, pouring down the mountains, crowd the shore.

Fragments they rend from off the craggy brow,

And dash the ruins on the ships below : 140

The crackling vessels burst ; hoarse groans arise,

And mingled horrors echo to the skies ;

The men, like fish, they stuck upon the flood,

And cramm'd their filthy throats with human food.

Whilst thus their fury rages at the bay, 145
 My sword our cables cut, I call'd to weigh;
 And charg'd my men, as they from Fate would fly,
 Each nerve to strain, each bending oar to ply.
 The sailors catch the word, their oars they seize,
 And sweep with equal strokes the smoky seas: 150
 Clear of the rocks th' impatient vessel flies;
 Whilst in the port each wretch encumber'd dies.
 With earnest haste my frightened sailors press,
 While kindling transports glow'd at our success;
 But the sad fate that did our friends destroy 155
 Cool'd every breast, and damp'd the rising joy.

Now dropp'd our anchors in the Ææan bay,
 Where Circe dwelt, the daughter of the Day;
 Her mother Persè, of old Ocean's strain,
 'Thus from the Sun descended and the Main 160
 (From the same lineage stern Æætes came,
 The far-fam'd brother of th' enchantress dame);
 Goddess, and queen, to whom the powers belong
 Of dreadful magic, and commanding song.
 Some God directing to this peaceful bay 165
 Silent we came, and melancholy lay,
 Spent and o'erwatch'd. Two days and nights roll'd on,
 And now the third succeeding morning shone.
 I climb'd a cliff, with spear and sword in hand,
 Whose ridge o'erlook'd a shady length of land: 170
 To learn if aught of mortal works appear,
 Or chearful voice of mortal strike the ear?
 From the high point I mark'd, in distant view,
 A stream of curling smoke ascending blue,

And

And spiry tops, the tufted trees above, 175
Of Circe's palace bosom'd in the grove.

Thither to haste, the region to explore,
Was first my thought: but speeding back to shore
I deem'd it best to visit first my crew,
And send out spies the dubious coast to view. 180

As down the hill I solitary go,
Some Power divine, who pities human woe,
Sent a tall stag, descending from the wood,
To cool his fervour in the crystal flood;
Luxuriant on the wave-worn bank he lay, 185
Stretch'd forth, and panting in the sunny ray.

I launch'd my spear, and with a sudden wound,
Transpierc'd his back, and fix'd him to the ground.
He falls, and mourns his fate with human cries:

Through the wide wound the vital spirit flies.

I drew, and casting on the river's side
The bloody spear, his gather'd feet I ty'd
With twining ozers which the bank supplied.

An ell in length the pliant whisp I weav'd, 195
And the huge body on my shoulders heav'd:

Then, leaning on my spear with both my hands,
Up-bore my load, and press'd the sinking sands
With weighty steps, till at the hip I threw
The welcome burden, and bespoke my crew:

Chear up, my friends! it is not yet our fate
To glide with ghosts through Pluto's gloomy gate.

Food in the desert land, behold! is given;
Live, and enjoy the providence of Heaven.

The joyful crew survey his mighty size,
And on the future banquet feast their eyes, 205

As huge in length extended lay the beast ;
 Then wash their hands, and hasten to the feast.
 There, till the setting sun roll'd down the light,
 They sate indulging in the genial rite.

When evening rose, and darkness covered o'er 210

The face of things, we slept along the shore.

But when the rosy morning warm'd the east,

My men I summon'd, and these words address :

Followers and friends; attend what I propose :

Ye sad companions of Ulysses' woes ! 215

We know not here what land before us lies,

Or to what quarter now we turn our eyes,

Or where the sun shall set, or where shall rise.

Here let us think (if thinking be not vain)

If any counsel, any hope remain. 220

Alas ! from yonder promontory's brow,

I view'd the coast, a region flat and low ;

An isle incircled with the boundless flood ;

A length of thickets, and entangled wood.

Some smoke I saw amid the forests rise, 225

And all around it only seas and skies !

With broken hearts my sad companions stood,

Mindful of Cyclop and his human food,

And horrid Læstrigons, the men of blood.

Prefaging tears apace began to rain; 230

But tears in mortal miseries are vain.

In equal parts I straight divide my band,

And name a chief each party to command ;

I led the one, and of the other side

Appointed brave Eurylochus the guide. 235

Then

Then in the brazen helm the lots we throw,
And Fortune casts Eurylochus to go :
He march'd, with twice eleven in his train :
Pensive they march, and pensive we remain.

The palace in a woody vale they found, 240
High rais'd of stone ; a shaded space around :
Where mountain wolves and brindled lions roam,
(By magic tam'd) familiar to the dome.

With gentle blandishment our men they meet,
And wag their tails, and fawning lick their feet. 245

As from some feast a man returning late,
His faithful dogs all meet him at the gate,
Rejoicing round, some morsel to receive
(Such as the good man ever us'd to give).

Domestic thus the grisly beasts drew near ; 250
They gaze with wonder, not unmix'd with fear.

Now on the threshold of the dome they stood,
And heard a voice resounding through the wood :

Plac'd at her loom within the Goddess sung ;
The vaulted roofs and solid pavement rung. 255

O'er the fair web the rising figures shine,
Immortal labour ! worthy hands divine.

Polites to the rest the question mov'd
(A gallant leader, and a man I lov'd) :

What voice celestial, chanting to the loom 260

(Or Nymph, or Goddess) echoes from the room ?

Say, shall we seek access ? With that they call ;

And wide unfold the portals of the hall.

The Goddess, rising, asks her guests to stay,
Who blindly follow where she leads the way. 265

Eurylochus alone of all the band,
 Suspecting fraud, more prudently remain'd.
 On thrones around with downy coverings grac'd,
 With semblance fair, th' unhappy men she plac'd.
 Milk newly press'd, the sacred flour of wheat, 270
 And honey fresh, and Pramnian wines the treat:
 But venom'd was the bread, and mix'd the bowl,
 With drugs of force to darken all the soul:
 Soon in the luscious feast themselves they lost,
 And drank oblivion of their native coast. 275
 Instant her circling wand the Goddess waves,
 'To hogs transforms them, and the sty receives.
 No more was seen the human form divine;
 Head, face, and members, bristle into swine:
 Still curs'd with sense, their minds remain alone, 280
 And their own voice affrights them when they groan.
 Meanwhile the Goddess in disdain bestows
 The mast and acorn, brutal food! and strows
 The fruits of cornel, as their feast, around;
 Now prone and groveling on unsavory ground. 285
 Eurylochus, with pensive steps and slow,
 Aghast returns; the messenger of woe,
 And bitter fate. To speak he made essay,
 In vain essay'd, nor would his tongue obey, }
 His swelling heart deny'd the words their way:
 But speaking tears the want of words supply,
 And the full soul bursts copious from his eye.
 Affrighted, anxious for our fellows' fates,
 We press to hear what sadly he relates:
 We went, Ulysses! (such was thy command) 295
 Through the lone thicket and the desert land.

A palace in a woody vale we found
Brown with dark forests, and with shades around.
A voice celestial echoed from the dome,
Or Nymph, or Goddess, chanting to the loom. 300

Access we sought, nor was access denied:
Radiant she came; the portal's open'd wide:
The Goddess mild invites the guests to stay:
They blindly follow where she leads the way.
I only wait behind, of all the train; 305
I waited long, and ey'd the doors in vain:
The rest are vanish'd, none repass'd the gate;
And not a man appears to tell their fate.

I heard, and instant o'er my shoulders flung
The belt in which my weighty faulchion hung 310
(A beamy blade); then seiz'd the bended bow,
And bade him guide the way, resolv'd to go.
He, prostrate falling, with both hands embrac'd
My knees, and, weeping, thus his suit address'd:

O king, belov'd of Jove! thy servant spare, 315
And ah, thyself, the rash attempt forbear!
Never, alas! thou never shalt return,
Or see the wretched for whose loss we mourn.
With what remains from certain ruin fly,
And save the few not fated yet to die. 320

I answer'd stern: Inglorious then remain,
Here feast and loiter, and desert thy train.
Alone, unfriended, will I tempt my way;
The laws of Fate compel, and I obey.

This said, and scornful turning from the shore
My haughty step, I stalk'd the valley o'er.

Till now approaching nigh the magic bower;
 Where dwelt th' enchantress skill'd in herbs of power,
 A form divine forth issued from the wood
 (Immortal Hermes with the golden rod) 330
 In human semblance. On his bloomy face
 Youth smil'd celestial, with each opening grace.
 He seiz'd my hand, and gracious thus began:
 Ah! whither roam'st thou, much-enduring man?
 Oh blind to fate! what led thy steps to rove 335
 The horrid mazes of this magic grove!
 Each friend you seek in yon enclosure lies,
 All lost their form, and habitants of sties.
 Think'st thou by wit to model their escape?
 Sooner shalt thou, a stranger to thy shape, 340
 Fall prone their equal: first thy danger know,
 Then take the antidote the Gods bestow.
 The plant I give, through all the direful bower
 Shall guard thee, and avert the evil hour.
 Now hear her wicked arts. Before thy eyes 345
 The bowl shall sparkle, and the banquet rise;
 Take this, nor from the faithless feast abstain,
 For temper'd drugs and poisons shall be vain.
 Soon as she strikes her wand, and gives the word,
 Draw forth and brandish thy refulgent sword, 350
 And menace death: those menaces shall move
 Her alter'd mind to blandishment and love.
 Nor shun the blessing proffer'd to thy arms,
 Ascend her bed, and taste celestial charms:
 So shall thy tedious toils a respite find, 355
 And thy lost friends return to human-kind.

But

But swear her first by those dread oaths that tie
The Powers below, the Blessed in the sky;
Left to thee naked secret fraud be meant,
Or magic bind thee cold and impotent.

560

Thus while he spoke, the sovereign plant he drew
Where on th' all-bearing earth unmark'd it grew,
And shew'd its nature and its wondrous power:
Black was the root, but milky-white the flower;
Moly the name, to mortals hard to find,
But all is easy to th' ætherial kind.

365

This Hermes gave; then, gliding off the glade,
Shot to Olympus from the woodland shade.

While, full of thought, revolving fates to come,
I speed my passage to th' enchanted dome:

370

Arriv'd, before the lofty gates I stay'd;
The lofty gates the Goddess wide display'd:
She leads before, and to the feast invites:
I follow sadly to the magic rites.

Radiant with starry studs, a silver seat

375

Receiv'd my limbs; a footstool eas'd my feet.

She mix'd the potion, fraudulent of soul;

The poison mantled in the golden bowl.

I took, and quaff'd it, confident in Heaven:

Then wav'd the wand, and then the word was given.

Hence to thy fellows! (dreadful she began)

Go, be a beast!—I heard, and yet was man.

Then sudden whirling, like a waving flame,
My beamy faulchion, I assault the dame.

Struck with unusual fear, she trembling cries,

385

She faints, she falls; she lifts her weeping eyes.

What

What art thou? say! from whence, from whom you
came?

Oh more than human! tell thy race, thy name.
Amazing strength these poisons to sustain!
Nor mortal thou, nor mortal is thy brain. 390
Or art thou he? the man to come (foretold
By Hermes powerful with the wand of gold)
The man from Troy, who wander'd ocean round;
The man for wisdom's various arts renown'd,
Ulysses? oh! thy threatening fury cease, 395
Sheath thy bright sword, and join our hands in peace;
Let mutual joys our mutual trust combine,
And love, and love-born confidence, be thine.

And how, dread Circe! (furious I rejoin)
Can love, and love-born confidence, be mine! 400
Beneath thy charms when my companions groan,
Transform'd to beasts, with accents not their own.
O thou of fraudulent heart! shall I be led
To share thy feast-rites, or ascend thy bed:
That, all unarm'd, thy vengeance may have vent, 405
And magick bind me, cold and impotent!
Celestial as thou art, yet stand denied;
Or swear that oath by which the Gods are tied,
Swear, in thy soul no latent frauds remain,
Swear by the vow which never can be vain. 410

The Goddess swore: then seiz'd my hand, and led
To the sweet transports of the genial bed.
Ministrant to their queen, with busy care
Four faithful handmaids the soft rites prepare;
Nymphs sprung from fountains, or from shady woods,
Or the fair offspring of the sacred floods.

One o'er the couches painted carpets threw,
 Whose purple lustre glow'd against the view :
 White linen lay beneath. Another plac'd
 The silver stands with golden flasks grac'd : 420
 With dulcet beverage this the beaker crown'd,
 Fair in the midst, with gilded cups around :
 That in the tripod o'er the kindled pile
 The water pours; the bubbling waters boil :
 An ample vase receives the smoking wave ; 425
 And, in the bath prepar'd, my limbs I lave :
 Reviving sweets repair the mind's decay,
 And take the painful sense of toil away.
 A vest and tunick o'er me next she threw,
 Fresh from the bath, and dropping balmy dew ; 430
 Then led and plac'd me on the sovereign seat,
 With carpets spread ; a footstool at my feet.
 The golden ewer a nymph obsequious brings,
 Replenish'd from the cool translucent springs :
 With copious water the bright vase supplies 435
 A silver laver of capacious size.
 I wash'd. The table in fair order spread,
 They heap the glittering canisters with bread ?
 Viands of various kinds allure the taste,
 Of choicest fort and flavour, rich repast ! 440
 Circe in vain invites the feast to share ;
 Absent I ponder, and absorb in care :
 While scenes of woe rose anxious in my breast,
 The queen beheld me, and those words address :
 Why sits Ulysses silent and apart, 445
 Some hoard of grief close-harbour'd at his heart ?
 Untouch'd

Untouch'd before thee stand the cates divine,
 And unregarded laughs the rosy wine.
 Can yet a doubt or any dread remain,
 When sworn that oath which never can be vain? 450
 I answer'd : Goddess! human is thy breast,
 By justice sway'd, by tender pity prest :
 Ill fits it me, whose friends are sunk to beasts,
 To quaff thy bowls, or riot in thy feasts.
 Me would'st thou please? for them thy cares employ,
 And them to me restore, and me to joy.

With that she parted; in her potent hand
 She bore the virtue of the magic wand.
 Then hastening to the flies, set wide the door,
 Urg'd forth, and drove the bristly herd before; 460
 Unwieldy, out they rush'd with general cry,
 Enormous beasts dishonest to the eye.
 Now touch'd by counter charms, they change again,
 And stand majestic, and recall'd to men.
 Those hairs, of late that bristled every part, 465
 Fall off; miraculous effect of art!
 Till all the form in full proportion rise,
 More young, more large, more graceful to my eyes.
 They saw, they knew me, and with eager pace
 Clung to their master in a long embrace : 470
 Sad, pleasing sight! with tears each eye ran o'er,
 And sobs of joy re-echoed through the bower:
 Ev'n Circe wept, her adamant heart
 Felt pity enter, and sustain'd her part.

Son of Laertes! (then the queen began) 475
 Oh much-enduring, much-experienc'd man!

Haste

Haste to thy vessel on the sea-beat shore,
 Unload thy treasures, and the galley moor:
 Then bring thy friends, secure from future harms,
 And in our grottoes stow thy spoils and arms. 480

She said: obedient to her high command,
 I quit the place, and hasten to the strand.
 My sad companions on the beach I found,
 Their wistful eyes in floods of sorrow drown'd.
 As from fresh pastures and the dewy field 485
 (When loaded cribs their evening banquet yield)

The lowing herds return; around them throng
 With leaps and bounds their late-imprison'd young,
 Rush to their mothers with unruly joy,
 And echoing hills return the tender cry: 490
 So round me press'd, exulting at my sight,
 With cries and agonies of wild delight,
 The weeping sailors; nor less fierce their joy
 Than if return'd to Ithaca from Troy.

Ah, master! ever honour'd, ever dear! 495
 (These tender words on every side I hear)
 What other joy can equal thy return?

Not that lov'd country for whose sight we mourn?
 The soil that nurs'd us, and that gave us breath:
 But, ah! relate our lost companions death. 500

I answer'd chearful: Haste, your galley moor,
 And bring our treasures and our arms ashore:
 Those in yon hollow caverns let us lay;
 Then rise, and follow where I lead the way.

Your fellows live: believe your eyes, and come 505
 To taste the joys of Circe's sacred dome.

With

With ready speed the joyful crew obey :
 Alone Eurylochus persuades their stay.
 Whither (he cry'd) ah ! whither will ye run ?
 Seek ye to meet those evils ye should shun ?
 Will you the terrors of the dome explore,
 In swine to grovel, or in lions roar,
 Or wolf-like howl away the midnight hour
 In dreadful watch around the magic bower ?
 Remember Cyclop, and his bloody deed ;
 The leader's rashness made the soldiers bleed.

510

515

I heard incens'd, and first resolv'd to speed
 My flying falchion at the rebel's head.
 Dear as he was, by ties of kindred bound,
 This hand had stretch'd him breathless on the ground.
 But all at once my interposing train
 For mercy pleaded, nor could plead in vain.
 Leave here the man who dares his prince desert,
 Leave to repentance and his own sad heart,
 To guard the ship. Seek we the sacred shades
 Of Circe's palace, where Ulysses leads.

525

This with one voice declar'd, the rising train
 Left the black vessel by the murmuring main.
 Shame touch'd Eurylochus's alter'd breast,
 He fear'd my threats, and follow'd with the rest.

530

Meanwhile the Goddess, with indulgent cares
 And social joys, the late transform'd repairs ;
 The bath, the feast, their fainting soul renews ;
 Rich in refulgent robes, and dropping balmy dews :
 Brightening with joy their eager eyes behold
 Each other's face, and each his story told ;

535

Then

Then gushing tears the narrative confound,
And with their sobs the vaulted roofs resound.
When hush'd their passion, thus the Goddess cries:
Ulysses, taught by labours to be wise,
Let this short memory of grief suffice.

540 }

To me are known the various woes ye bore,
In storms by sea, in perils on the shore;
Forget whatever was in Fortune's power,
And share the pleasures of this genial hour.
Such be your minds as ere ye left your coast,
Or learn'd to sorrow for a country lost.

545

Exiles and wanderers now, where-e'er ye go
Too faithful memory renews your woe;
The cause remov'd, habitual griefs remain,
And the soul saddens by the use of pain.

550

Her kind entreaty mov'd the general breast;
Tir'd with long toil, we willing sunk to rest.
We ply'd the banquet, and the bowl we crown'd,
Till the full circle of the year came round.

555

But when the seasons, following in their train,
Brought back the months, the days, and hours again;
As from a lethargy at once they rise,
And urge their chief with animating cries:

Is this, Ulysses, our inglorious lot?

560

And is the name of Ithaca forgot?

Shall never the dear land in prospect rise,

Or the lov'd palace glitter in our eyes?

Melting I heard; yet till the sun's decline

Prolong'd the feast, and quaff'd the rosy wine:

565

But when the shades came on at evening hour,

And all lay slumbering in the dusky bower;

I came

I came a suppliant to fair Circe's bed,

The tender moment seiz'd, and thus I said :

Be mindful, Goddess, of thy promise made; 570

Must sad Ulysses ever be delay'd ?

Around their lord my sad companions mourn,

Each breast beats homeward, anxious to return :

If but a moment parted from thy eyes,

Their tears flow round me, and my heart complies. 575

Go then, (she cry'd) ah, go ! yet think, not I,

Not Circe, but the Fates, your wish deny.

Ah, hope not yet to breathe thy native air !

Far other journey first demands thy care ;

To tread th' uncomfortable paths beneath, 580

And view the realms of darkness and of death.

There seek the Theban bard, depriv'd of sight ;

Within, irradiate with prophetic light ;

To whom Persephone, entire and whole,

Gave to retain th' unseparated soul : 585

The rest are forms, of empty æther made ;

Impassive semblance, and a flitting shade.

Struck at the word, my very heart was dead :

Pensive I fate ; my tears bedew'd the bed ;

To hate the light and life my soul begun, 590

And saw that all was grief beneath the sun.

Compos'd at length, the gushing tears suppress,

And my tost limbs now weary'd into rest :

How shall I tread (I cry'd) ah, Circe ! say,

The dark descent, and who shall guide the way ? 595

Can living eyes behold the realms below ?

What bark to waft me, and what wind to blow ?

Thy

Thy fated road (the magic power reply'd)
 Divine Ulysses! asks no mortal guide.
 Rear but the mast, the spacious sail display, 600
 The northern winds shall wing thee on thy way.
 Soon shalt thou reach old Ocean's utmost ends,
 Where to the main the shelving shore descends;
 The barren trees of Proserpine's black woods,
 Poplars and willows trembling o'er the floods: 605
 There fix thy vessel in the lonely bay,
 And enter there the kingdoms void of day:
 Where Phlegeton's loud torrents, rushing down,
 His in the flaming gulph of Acheron;
 And where, slow-rolling from the Stygian bed, 610
 Cocytus' lamentable waters spread:
 Where the dark rocks o'erhang th' infernal lake,
 And mingling streams eternal murmurs make.
 First draw thy faulchion, and on every side
 Trench the black earth a cubit long and wide: 615
 To all the shades around libations pour,
 And o'er th' ingredients strow the hallow'd flour:
 New wine and milk, with honey temper'd, bring;
 And living waters from the crystal spring.
 Then the wan shades and feeble ghosts implore, 620
 With promis'd offerings on thy native shore;
 A barren cow, the stateliest of the isle,
 And, heap'd with various wealth, a blazing pile:
 These to the rest; but to the seer must bleed
 A sable ram, the pride of all thy breed. 625
 These solemn vows and holy offerings paid
 To all the phantom-nations of the dead;

Be next thy care the fable sheep to place
 Full o'er the pit, and hell-ward turn their face:
 But from th' infernal rite thine eye withdraw, 630
 And back to Ocean glance with reverend awe.
 Sudden shall skim along the dusky glades
 Thin airy shoals, and visionary shades.
 Then give command the sacrifice to haste,
 Let the slay'd victims in the flame be cast, 635
 And sacred vows and mystic song apply'd
 To grisly Pluto and his gloomy bride.
 Wide o'er the pool, thy falchion wav'd around
 Shall drive the spectres from forbidden ground:
 The sacred draught shall all the dead forbear, 640
 Till awful from the shades arise the seer.
 Let him, oraculous, the end, the way,
 The turns of all thy future fate, display, }
 Thy pilgrimage to come, and remnant of thy day. }
 So speaking, from the ruddy orient shone 645
 The morn, conspicuous on her golden throne.
 The Goddess with a radiant tunic dress'd
 My limbs, and o'er me cast a filken vest.
 Long flowing robes of purest white array
 The nymph, that added lustre to the day: 650
 A tiar wreath'd her head with many a fold;
 Her waist was circled with a zone of gold.
 Forth issuing then, from place to place I flew;
 Rouze man by man, and animate my crew.
 Rise, rise, my mates! 'tis Circe gives command: 655
 Our journey calls us; haste, and quit the land.
 All rise and follow, yet depart not all,
 For Fate decreed one wretched man to fall.

A youth

A youth there was, Elpenor was he nam'd,
 Not much for sense, nor much for courage fam'd :
 The youngest of our band, a vulgar soul.
 Born but to banquet, and to drain the bowl.
 He, hot and careless, on a turret's height
 With sleep repair'd the long debauch of night :
 The sudden tumult stirr'd him where he lay, 665
 And down he hasten'd, but forgot the way ;
 Full endlong from the roof the sleeper fell,
 And snapp'd the spinal joint, and wak'd in hell.

The rest crowd round me with an eager look ;
 I met them with a sigh, and thus bespoke : 670
 Already, friends ! ye think your toils are o'er,
 Your hopes already touch your native shore :
 Alas ! far otherwise the nymph declares,
 Far other journey first demands our cares ;
 To tread th' uncomfortable paths beneath, 675
 The dreary realms of darkness and of death :
 To seek Tiresias' awful shade below,
 And thence our fortunes and our fates to know.

My sad companions heard in deep despair ;
 Frantic they tore their manly growth of hair ; 680
 To earth they fell ; the tears began to rain ;
 But tears in mortal miseries are vain.
 Sadly they far'd along the sea-beat shore ;
 Still heav'd their hearts, and still their eyes ran o'er.
 The ready victims at our bark we found, 685
 The sable ewe and ram, together bound,

For swift as thought the Goddess had been there,
And thence had glided viewless as the air :
The paths of Gods what mortal can survey ?
Who eyes their motion ? who shall trace their way ?

THE
ELEVENTH BOOK
OF THE
ODYSSEY.

A R G U M E N T.

The Descent into Hell.

ULYSSES continues his narration, How he arrived at the land of the Cimmerians, and what ceremonies he performed to invoke the dead. The manner of his descent, and the apparition of the shades: his conversation with Elpenor, and with Tiresias, who informs him in a prophetic manner of his fortunes to come. He meets his mother Anticlea, from whom he learns the state of his family. He sees the shades of the ancient heroines, afterwards of the heroes, and converses in particular with Agamemnon and Achilles. Ajax keeps at a sullen distance, and disdains to answer him. He then beholds Tityus, Tantalus, Syphilus, Hercules; till he is deterred from further curiosity by the apparition of horrid Spectres, and the cries of the wicked in torments.

T H E
O D Y S S E Y.
B O O K XI.

NOW to the shores we bend, a mournful train,
 Climb the tall bark, and launch into the main :
 At once the mast we rear, at once unbind
 The spacious sheet, and stretch it to the wind :
 Then pale and pensive stand, with cares oppress, 5
 And solemn horror saddens every breast.
 A freshening breeze the * Magic Power supplied,
 While the wing'd vessel flew along the tide ;
 Our oars we shipp'd : all day the swelling sails
 Full from the guiding pilot catch'd the gales. 10
 Now sunk the sun from his ærial height,
 And o'er the shaded billows rush'd the night :
 When, lo ! we reach'd old Ocean's utmost bounds,
 Where rocks control his waves with ever-during mounds.
 There in a lonely land, and gloomy cells, 15
 The dusky nation of Cimmeria dwells ;
 The sun ne'er views th' uncomfortable seats,
 When radiant he advances, or retreats :
 Unhappy race ! whom endless night invades,
 Clouds the dull air, and wraps them round in shades.

* Circe.

The ship we moor on these obscure abodes;
 Disbark the sheep, an offering to the Gods;
 And, hell-ward bending, o'er the beach descry
 The dolesome passage to th' infernal sky.
 The victims, vow'd to each Tartarean Power,
 Eurylochus and Perimedes bore.

25

Here open'd hell, all hell I here implor'd,
 And from the seaboard drew the shining sword;
 And, trenching the black earth on every side,
 A cavern form'd, a cubit long and wide.
 New wine, with honey-temper'd milk, we bring,
 Then living waters from the crystal spring;
 O'er these was strew'd the consecrated flour,
 And on the surface shone the holy store.

30

Now the wan shades we hail, th' infernal Gods,
 To speed our course, and waft us o'er the floods:
 So shall a barren heifer from the stall
 Beneath the knife upon your altars fall;
 So in our palace, at our safe return,
 Rich with unnumber'd gifts the pile shall burn;
 So shall a ram the largest of the breed,
 Black as these regions, to Tiresias bleed.

40

Thus solemn rites and holy vows we paid
 To all the phantom-nations of the dead,
 Then dy'd the sheep; a purple torrent flow'd,
 And all the caverns smok'd with streaming blood.
 When, lo! appear'd along the dusky coasts,
 Thin, airy shoals of visionary ghosts;
 Fair, pensive youths, and soft enamour'd maids;
 And wither'd elders, pale and wrinkled shades;

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50

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Ghastly with wounds the forms of warriors slain
Stalk'd with majestic port, a martial train:
These, and a thousand more swarm'd o'er the ground,
And all the dire assembly shriek'd around.

Astonish'd at the sight, aghast I stood, 55

And a cold fear ran shivering through my blood;

Straight I command the sacrifice to haste,

Straight the slay'd victims to the flames are cast,

And mutter'd vows, and mystic song applied

To grisly Pluto, and his gloomy bride. 60

Now swift I wave my falchion o'er the blood;

Back started the pale throngs, and trembling stood.

Round the black trench the gore-untasted flows,

Till awful from the shades Tiresias rose.

There wandering through the gloom I first survey'd,

New to the realms of death, Elpenor's shade:

His cold remains all naked to the sky

On distant shores unwept, unburied lie.

Sad at the sight I stand, deep fix'd in woe,

And ere I spoke the tears began to flow: 70

O say what angry power Elpenor led

To glide in shades, and wander with the dead?

How could thy soul, by realms and seas disjoin'd,

Out-fly the nimble sail, and leave the lagging wind?

The ghost replied: To hell my doom I owe, 75

Dæmons accurst, dire ministers of woe!

My feet, through wine unfaithful to their weight,

Betray'd me tumbling from a towery height,

Staggering I reel'd, and as I reel'd I fell,

Lux'd the neck-joint—my soul descends to hell. 80

But

But lend me aid, I now conjure thee lend,
 By the soft tie and sacred name of friend!
 By thy fond comfort! by thy father's cares!
 By lov'd Telemachus's blooming years!
 For well I know that soon the heavenly Powers
 Will give thee back to day, and Circe's shores:
 There pious on my cold remains attend,
 There call to mind thy poor departed friend.
 The tribute of a tear is all I crave,
 And the possession of a peaceful grave.
 But if, unheard, in vain compassion plead,
 Revere the Gods, the Gods avenge the dead!
 A tomb along the watery margin raise,
 The tomb with manly arms and trophies grace,
 To shew posterity Elpenor was.
 There high in air, memorial of my name,
 Fix the smooth oar, and bid me live to fame.

To whom with tears; These rites, O mournful
 shade,

Due to thy ghost, shall to thy ghost be paid.

Still as I spoke, the phantom seem'd to moan, 100
 Tear follow'd tear, and groan succeeded groan.
 But, as my waving sword the blood furrounds,
 The shade withdrew, and mutter'd empty sounds.

There as the wondrous visions I survey'd,
 All pale ascends my royal mother's shade: 105
 A queen, to Troy she saw our legions pass;
 Now a thin form is all Anticlea was!
 Struck at the sight, I melt with filial woe,
 And down my cheek the pious sorrows flow,

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Yet as I shook my falchion o'er the blood, 110
 Regardless of her son the parent stood.

When lo! the mighty Theban I behold;
 To guide his steps he bore a staff of gold;
 Awful he trod! majestic was his look!
 And from his holy lips these accents broke: 115

Why, mortal, wanderest thou from chearful day,
 To tread the downward, melancholy way?
 What angry Gods to these dark regions led
 Thee yet alive, companion of the dead?
 But sheath thy poniard, while my tongue relates 120
 Heaven's steadfast purpose, and thy future fates.

While yet he spoke, the Prophet I obey'd,
 And in the scabbard plung'd the glittering blade:
 Eager he quaff'd the gore, and then exprest
 Dark things to come, the counsels of his breast: 125

Weary of light, Ulysses here explores
 A prosperous voyage to his native shores;
 But know—by me unerring Fates disclose
 New trains of dangers, and new scenes of woes;
 I see! I see thy bark by Neptune tost, 130

For injur'd Cyclop, and his eye-ball lost!
 Yet to thy woes the Gods decree an end,
 If Heaven thou please, and how to please attend!
 Where on Trinacrian rocks the ocean roars,
 Graze numerous herds along the verdant shores; 135

Though hunger preys, yet fly the dangerous prey,
 The herds are sacred to the God of Day,
 Who all surveys with his extensive eye
 Above, below, on earth, and in the sky!

Rob not the God; and so propitious gales
 Attend thy voyage, and impel thy sails:
 But, if his herds ye seize, beneath the waves
 I see thy friends o'erwhelm'd in liquid graves!
 The direful wreck Ulysses scarce survives!
 Ulysses at his country scarce arrives!
 Strangers thy guides! nor there thy labours end,
 New foes arise, domestic ills attend!
 There foul adulterers to thy bride resort,
 And lordly gluttons riot in thy court!
 But vengeance hastes amain! These eyes behold
 The deathful scene, princes on princes roll'd!
 That done, a people far from sea explore,
 Who ne'er knew salt, or heard the billows roar,
 Or saw gay vessel stem the watery plain,
 A painted wonder flying on the main!
 Bear on thy back an oar: with strange amaze
 A shepherd meeting thee, the oar surveys,
 And names a van: there fix it on the plain,
 To calm the God that holds the watery reign;
 A three-fold offering to his altar bring,
 A bull, a ram, a boar; and hail the Ocean-King.
 But, home return'd, to each æthereal power
 Slay the due victim in the genial hour:
 So peaceful shalt thou end thy blissful days,
 And steal thyself from life by slow decays:
 Unknown to pain, in age resign thy breath,
 When late stern Neptune points the shaft with death:
 To the dark grave retiring as to rest,
 Thy people blessing, by thy people blest!

Unerring

Unerring truths, O man, my lips relate; 170
This is thy life to come, and this is fate.

To whom unmov'd: If this the Gods prepare;
What Heaven ordains, the wife with courage bear.
But say, why yonder on the lonely strands,
Unmindful of her son, Anticlea stands? 175

Why to the ground she bends her downcast eye?
Why is she silent, while her son is nigh?
The latent cause, O sacred fear, reveal!

Nor this, replies the fear, will I conceal.
Know, to the spectres, that thy beverage taste, 180
The scenes of life recur, and actions past:
They, seal'd with truth, return the sure reply;
The rest, repell'd, a train oblivious fly.

The phantom-prophet ceas'd, and sunk from sight
To the black palace of eternal night. 185

Still in the dark abodes of death I stood,
When near Anticlea mov'd, and drank the blood.
Straight all the mother in her soul awakes,
And, owning her Ulysses, thus she speaks:
Com'st thou, my son, alive, to realms beneath, 190
The doleful realms of darkness and of death:
Com'st thou alive from pure, æthereal day?

Dire is the region, dismal is the way!
Here lakes profound, there floods oppose their waves,
There the wide sea with all his billows raves! 195
Or (since to dust proud Troy submits her towers)
Com'st thou a wanderer from the Phrygian shores?
Or say, since honour call'd thee to the field,
Hast thou thy Ithaca, thy bride beheld?

Source of my life, I cry'd, from earth I fly, 200
 To seek Tiresias in the nether sky,
 To learn my doom; for, tost from woe to woe,
 In every land Ulysses finds a foe:
 Nor have these eyes beheld my native shores,
 Since in the dust proud Troy submits her towers. 205

But, when thy soul from her sweet mansion fled,
 Say what distemper gave thee to the dead?
 Has life's fair lamp declin'd by slow decays,
 Or swift expir'd it in a sudden blaze?
 Say if my fire, good old Laertes, lives? 210
 If yet Telemachus, my son, survives?
 Say by his rule is my dominion aw'd,
 Or crush'd by traitors with an iron rod?
 Say if my spouse maintains her royal trust;
 Though tempted, chaste, and obstinately just! 215
 Or if no more her absent lord she wails,
 But the false woman o'er the wife prevails?

Thus I, and thus the parent-shade returns:
 Thee, ever thee, thy faithful consort mourns:
 Whether the night descends, or day prevails, 220
 Thee she by night, and thee by day bewails,
 Thee in Telemachus thy realm obeys;
 In sacred groves celestial rites he pays,
 And shares the banquet in superior state,
 Grac'd with such honours as become the great. 225
 Thy fire in solitude foment his care:
 The court is joyless, for thou art not there!
 No costly carpets raise his hoary head,
 No rich embroidery shines to grace his bed:

Ev'n

Ev'n when keen winter freezes in the skies, 230

Rank'd with his slaves, on earth the monarch lies :

Deep are his sighs, his visage pale, his drefs

The garb of woe and habit of diftrefs.

And when the autumn takes his annual round,

The leafy honours scattering on the ground ; 235

Regardless of his years, abroad he lies,

His bed the leaves, his canopy the skies.

Thus cares on cares his painful days confume,

And bow his age with sorrow to the tomb !

For thee, my fon, I wept my life away ; 240

For thee through hell's eternal dungeons stray :

Nor came my fate by lingering pains and flow,

Nor bent the filver-shafted Queen her bow ;

No dire difeafe bereav'd me of my breath ;

Thou, thou, my fon, wert my difeafe and death ; 245

Unkindly with my love my fon conspir'd,

For thee I liv'd, for abfent thee expir'd.

Thrice in my arms I strove her fhade to bind,

Thrice through my arms fhe flipt like empty wind, }

Or dreams, the vain illufions of the mind. 250

Wild with defpair, I fhed a copious tide

Of flowing tears, and thus with fighs reply'd :

Fly'ft thou, lov'd fhade, while I thus fondly mourn ?

Turn to my arms, to my embraces turn !

Is it, ye powers that fmile at human harms ! 255

Too great a blifs to weep within her arms ?

Or has hell's Queen an empty image fent,

That wretched I might ev'n my joys lament ?

O fon of woe, the penfive fhade rejoin'd,

Oh moft inur'd to grief of all mankind ! 260

'Tis

'Tis not the Queen of hell who thee deceives:
 All, all are such, when life the body leaves;
 No more the substance of the man remains,
 Nor bounds the blood along the purple veins:
 These the funereal flames in atoms bear,
 To wander with the wind in empty air;
 While the impassive soul reluctant flies,
 Like a vain dream, to these infernal skies.
 But from the dark dominions speed thy way,
 And climb the steep ascent to upper day;
 To thy chaste bride the wondrous story tell,
 The woes, the horrors, and the laws of hell.

265

270

Thus while she spoke, in swarms hell's Empress brings
 Daughters and wives of heroes and of kings;
 Thick and more thick they gather round the blood,
 Ghost throng'd on ghost (a dire assembly) stood!
 Dauntless my sword I seize: the airy crew,
 Swift as it flash'd along the gloom, withdrew:
 Then shade to shade in mutual forms succeeds,
 Her race recounts, and their illustrious deeds.

280

Tyro began, whom great Salmoneus bred;
 The royal partner of fam'd Cretheus' bed.
 For fair Enipeus, as from fruitful urns
 He pours his watery store, the virgin burns;
 Smooth flows the gentle stream with wanton pride,
 And in soft mazes rolls a silver tide.

As on his banks the maid enamour'd roves,
 The monarch of the deep beholds and loves!
 In her Enipeus' form and borrow'd charms,
 The amorous God descends into her arms:

290

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Around, a spacious arch of waves he throws,
And high in air the liquid mountain rose;
Thus in surrounding floods conceal'd he proves
The pleasing transport, and compleates his loves.

Then, softly sighing, he the fair address'd, 295
And as he spoke her tender hand he press'd:
Hail, happy nymph! no vulgar births are ow'd
To the prolific raptures of a God:

Lo! when nine times the moon renews her horn,
Two brother heroes shall from thee be born; 300

Thy early care the future worthies claim,
To point them to the arduous paths of fame;
But in thy breast th' important truth conceal,
Nor dare the secret of a God reveal:

For know, thou Neptune view'ft! and at my nod 305
Earth trembles, and the waves confess their God.

He added not, but mounting spurn'd the plain,
Then plung'd into the chambers of the main.

Now in the time's full process forth she brings
Jove's dread vice-gerents, in two future kings; 310

O'er proud Icolos Pelias stretch'd his reign,
And god-like Neleus rul'd the Pylian plain:

Then, fruitful, to her Cretheus' royal bed
She gallant Pheres and fam'd Æson bred:

From the same fountain Amythaon rose, 315
Pleas'd with the din of war, and noble shout of foes.

There mov'd Antiope with haughty charms,
Who blest th' Almighty Thunderer in her arms:

Hence sprung Amphion, hence brave Zethus came,
Founders of Thebes, and men of mighty name; 320

Though bold in open field, they yet surround
The town with walls, and mound inject on mound;
Here ramparts stood, there towers rose high in air,
And here through seven wide portals rush'd the war.

There with soft step the fair Alcmena trod, 325
Who bore Alcides to the Thundering God:
And Megara, who charm'd the son of Jove,
And soften'd his turn foul to tender love.

Sullen and sour with discontented mien
Jocasta frown'd, th' incestuous Theban queen; 330
With her own son she join'd in nuptial bands,
Though father's blood imbrued his murderous hands:
The Gods and men the dire offence detest,
The Gods with all their furies rend his breast:
In lofty Thebes he wore th' imperial crown, 335
A pompous wretch! accurs'd upon a throne.
The wife self-murder'd from a beam depends;
And her foul soul to blackest hell descends;
Thence to her son the choicest plagues she brings,
And his fiends haunt him with a thousand stings. 340

And now the beauteous Chloris I discern,
A lovely shade, Amphion's youngest joy!
With gifts unnumber'd Neleus sought her arms,
Nor paid too dearly for unequal'd charms,
Great in Orchomenos, in Pylos great, 345
He sway'd the sceptre with imperial state.
Three gallant sons the joyful monarch told,
Sage Nestor, Periclimenus the bold,
And Chromius last; but of the softer race,
One nymph alone, a miracle of grace. 350

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Kings on their thrones for lovely Pero burn ;
The fire denies, and kings rejected mourn.
To him alone the beauteous prize he yields,
Whose arm should ravish from Phylacian fields

The herds of Iphyclus, detain'd in wrong ; 355

Wild, furious herds, unconquerably strong !
This dares a feer, but nought the feer prevails
In beauty's cause illustriously he fails ;

Twelve moons the foe the captive youth detains

In painful dungeons, and coercive chains ; 360

The foe at last, from durance where he lay,

His art revering, gave him back to day ;

Won by prophetic knowledge, to fulfill

The steadfast purpose of th' Almighty will.

With grateful port advancing now I spy'd 365

Leda the fair, the God-like Tyndar's bride :

Hence Pollux sprung, who wields with furious sway

The deathful gauntlet matchless in the fray ;

And Castor glorious on th' embattled plain

Curbs the proud steed, reluctant to the rein : 370

By turns they visit this æthereal sky,

And live alternate, and alternate die :

In hell beneath, on earth, in heaven above,

Reign the Twin-gods, the favourite sons of Jove.

There Ephimedia trod the gloomy plain, 375

Who charm'd the Monarch of the boundless main ;

Hence Ephialtes, hence stern Otus sprung,

More fierce than giants, more than giants strong ;

The earth o'erburthen'd groan'd beneath their weight,

None but Orion e'er surpass'd their height : 380

The wonderous youths had scarce nine winters told,
 When high in air, tremendous to behold,
 Nine ells aloft they rear'd their towering head,
 And full nine cubits broad their shoulders spread.
 Proud of their strength and more than mortal size, 385
 The Gods they challenge, and affect the skies;
 Heav'd on Olympus tottering Ossa stood;
 On Ossa, Pelion nods with all his wood:
 Such were they youths! had they to manhood grown,
 Almighty Jove had trembled on his throne. 390
 But, ere the harvest of the beard began
 To bristle on the chin, and promise man,
 His shafts Apollo aim'd; at one they found,
 And stretch the giant-monsters o'er the ground

There mournful Phædra with sad Procris moves,
 Both beauteous shades, both hapless in their loves;
 And near them walk'd, with solemn pace and slow,
 Sad Ariadne, partner of their woe;
 The royal Minos Ariadne bred,
 She Theseus lov'd; from Crete with Theseus fled; 400
 Swift to the Dian isle the hero flies,
 And tow'rd his Athens bears the lovely prize;

There Bacchus with fierce rage Diana fires,
 The Goddess aims her shaft, the nymph expires,

There Clymenè and Mera I behold; 405
 There Eriphylè weeps, who loosely sold
 Her lord, her honour, for the lust of gold.
 But should I all recount, the night would fail,
 Unequal to the melancholy tale:

And all-composing rest my nature craves,
 Here in the court, or yonder on the waves;

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In you I trust, and in the heavenly powers,
To land Ulysses on his native shores.

He ceas'd : but left so charming on their ear
His voice, that listening still they seem'd to hear. 415
Till, rising up, Aretè silence broke,
Stretch'd out her snowy hand, and thus she spoke :

What wonderous man Heaven sends us in our guest !
Through all his woes the hero shines confest ;
His comely port, his ample frame, expresses 420
A manly air, majestic in distress.
He, as my guest, is my peculiar care,
You share the pleasure, then in bounty share ;
To worth in misery a reverence pay,
And with a generous hand reward his stay ; 425
For, since kind Heaven with wealth our realm has blest
Give it to Heaven, by aiding the distress.

Then sage Echeneus, whose grave reverend brow
The hand of time had silver'd o'er with snow,
Mature in wisdom rose : Your words, he cries, 430
Demand obedience, for your words are wise.
But let our king direct the glorious way
To generous act ; our part is to obey.

While life informs these limbs, (the king reply'd)
Well to deserve, be all my cares employ'd : 435
But here this night the royal guest detain,
Till the sun flames along th' ætherial plain :
Be it my task to send with ample stores
The stranger from our hospitable shores :
Tread you my steps ! 'Tis mine to lead the race, 440
The first in glory as the first in place.

To whom the prince : This night with joy I stay,
 O, monarch great in virtue as in sway !
 If thou the circling year my stay control,
 To raise a bounty noble as thy soul ; 445
 The circling year I wait, with ampler stores
 And fitter pomp to hail my native shores ;
 Then by my realms due homage would be paid ;
 For wealthy kings are loyally obey'd !

O king ! for such thou art, and sure thy blood 450
 Through veins (he cry'd) of royal fathers flow'd ;
 Unlike those vagrants who on falsehood live,
 Skill'd in smooth tales, and artful to deceive ;
 Thy better soul abhors the liar's part,
 Wise is thy voice, and noble is thy heart ; 455
 Thy words like music every breast control,
 Steal through the ear, and win upon the soul ;
 Soft, as some song divine, thy story flows
 Nor better could the Muse record thy woes.

But say, upon the dark and dismal coast, 460
 Saw'st thou the worthies of the Grecian host ?
 The god-like leaders who, in battle slain,
 Fell before Troy, and nobly prest the plain ?
 And, lo ! a length of night behind remains,
 The evening stars still mount th' æthereal plains. 465
 Thy tale with raptures I could hear thee tell,
 Thy woes on earth, the wonderous scenes in hell,
 Till in the vault of heaven the stars decay,
 And the sky reddens with the rising day.

O worthy of the power the Gods assign'd, 470
 (Ulysses thus replies) a king in mind !

Since

Since yet the early hour of night allows
Time for discourse, and time for soft repose,
If scenes of misery can entertain,

Woes I unfold, of woes a dismal train.

475

Prepare to hear of murder and of blood:

Of God-like heroes who uninjur'd stood

Amidst a war of spears in foreign lands,

Yet bled at home, and bled by female hands.

Now summon'd Proserpine to hell's black hall

480

The heroine shades; they vanquish'd at her call.

When, lo! advanc'd the forms of heroes slain

By stern Ægythus, a majestic train;

And high above the rest, Atrides prest the plain.

He quaff'd the gore; and straight his soldier knew,

And from his eyes pour'd down the tender dew,

His arms he stretch'd; his arms the touch deceive,

Nor in the fond embrace, embraces give:

His substance vanish'd, and his strength decay'd,

Now all Atrides is an empty shade.

490

Mov'd at the sight, I for a space resign'd

To soft affliction all my manly mind;

At last with tears—O what relentless doom,

Imperial phantom, bow'd thee to the tomb?

Say while the sea, and wild the tempest raves,

495

Has fate oppress'd thee in the roaring waves,

Or nobly seiz'd thee in the dire alarms

Of war and slaughter, and the clash of arms?

The ghost returns: O chief of human-kind

For active courage and a patient mind;

500

Nor while the sea, nor while the tempest raves,

Has Fate oppress'd me on the roaring waves!

Nor nobly seiz'd me in the dire alarms
 Of war and slaughter, and the clash of arms.
 Stabb'd by a murderous hand Atrides dy'd, 505
 A foul adulterer, and a faithless bride;
 Ev'n in my mirth and at the friendly feast,
 O'er the full bowl, the traitor stabb'd his guest;
 'Thus by the gory arm of slaughter falls
 The stately ox, and bleeds within the stalls. 510
 But not with me the direful murder ends,
 'These, these expir'd! their crime, they were my friends!
 'Thick as the boars, which some luxurious lord
 Kills for the feast, to crown the nuptial board.
 When war has thunder'd with its loudest storms, 515
 Death thou hast seen in all her ghastly forms;
 In duel meet her, on the list'd ground,
 When hand to hand they wound return for wound;
 But never have thy eyes astonish'd view'd
 So vile a deed, so dire a scene of blood. 520
 Ev'n in the flow of joy, when now the bowl
 Glows in our veins, and opens every soul,
 We groan, we faint; with blood the dome is dy'd,
 And o'er the pavement floats the dreadful tide—
 Her breast all gore, with lamentable cries, 525
 The bleeding innocent Cassandra dies!
 'Then though pale death froze cold in every vein,
 My sword I strive to wield, but strive in vain;
 Nor did my traitress wife these eye-lids close.
 Or decently in death my limbs compose. 530
 O woman, woman, when to ill thy mind
 Is bent, all hell contains no fouler fiend:

And

And such was mine ! who basely plung'd her sword
Through the fond bosom where she reign'd ador'd !

Alas ! I hop'd, the toils of war o'ercome, 535

To meet soft quiet and repose at home ;

Delusive Hope ! O wife, thy deeds disgrace

The perjur'd sex, and blacken all the race ;

And should posterity one virtuous find,

Name Clytemnestra, they will curse the kind. 540

O injur'd shade, I cry'd, what mighty woes

To thy imperial race from woman rose !

By woman here thou tread'st this mournful strand,

And Greece by woman lies a desert land.

Warn'd by my ills beware, the shade replies, 545

Nor trust the sex that is so rarely wise ;

When earnest to explore thy secret breast,

Unfold some trifle, but conceal the rest.

But in thy comfort cease to fear a foe,

For thee she feels sincerity of woe : 550

When Troy first bled beneath the Grecian arms,

She shone unrival'd with a blaze of charms ;

Thy infant son her fragrant bosom press'd,

Hung at her knee, or wanton'd at her breast ;

But now the years a numerous train have ran ; 555

The blooming boy is ripen'd into man ;

Thy eyes shall see him burn with noble fire,

The fire shall bless his son, the son his fire :

But my Orestes never met these eyes,

Without one look the murther'd father dies ; 560

Then from a wretched friend this wisdom learn,

Ev'n to thy queen disguis'd, unknown, return ;

For

For since of womankind so few are just,
Think all are false, nor ev'n the faithful trust.

But say, resides my son in royal port, 565
In rich Orchomenos, or Sparta's court?
Or say in Pyle? for yet he views the light,
Nor glides a phantom through the realms of night.

Then I: Thy suit is vain, nor can I say
If yet he breathes in realms of chearful day; 570
Or pale or wan beholds these nether skies:
Truth I reverè: for Wisdom never lies.

Thus in a tide of tears our sorrows flow,
And add new horror to the realms of woe;
Till side by side along the dreary coast 575
Advanc'd Achilles' and Patroclus' ghost,
A friendly pair! near these the * Pylia stray'd,
And towering Ajax, an illustrious shade!
War was his joy, and pleas'd with loud alarms,
None but Pelides brighter shone in arms. 580
Through the thick gloom his friend Achilles knew,
And as he speaks the tears descend in dew.

Com'st thou alive to view the Stygian bounds,
Where the van spectres walk eternal rounds;
Nor fear'st the dark and dismal waste to tread, 585
Throng'd with pale ghosts familiar with the dead?

To whom with sighs: I pass these dreadful gates
To seek the Theban, and consult the Fates:
For still, distrest, I rove from coast to coast,
Lost to my friends, and to my country lost. 590
But sure the eye of Time beholds no name
So blest as thine in all the rolls of fame;

* Antilochus.

Alive

Alive we hail'd thee with our guardian Gods,
 And dead, thou rul'st a king in these abodes.
 Talk not of ruling in this dolorous gloom, 595
 Nor think vain words (he cried) can ease my doom.
 Rather I chuse laboriously to bear
 A weight of woes, and breathe the vital air,
 A slave to some poor hind that toils for bread;
 Than reign the sceptred monarch of the dead. 600
 But say, if in my steps my son proceeds.
 And emulates his god-like father's deeds?
 If at the clash of arms, and shout of foes,
 Swells his bold heart, his bosom nobly glows?
 Say, if my fire, the reverend Peleus, reigns, 605
 Great in his Pthia, and his throne maintains:
 Or, weak and old, my youthful arm demands,
 To fix the sceptre stedfast in his hands?
 Oh might the lamp of life rekindled burn,
 And death release me from the silent urn! 610
 This arm, that thunder'd o'er the Phrygian plain,
 And swell'd the ground with mountains of the slain,
 Should vindicate my injur'd father's fame,
 Crush the proud rebel, and assert his claim.
 Illustrious shade, (I cried) of Peleus' fates 615
 No circumstance the voice of Fame relates:
 But hear with pleas'd attention the renown,
 The wars and wisdom of thy gallant son:
 With me from Scyros to the field of fame
 Radiant in arms the blooming hero came. 620
 When Greece assembled all her hundred states,
 To ripen counsels, and decide debates;
 Heavens!

Heavens ! how he charm'd us with a flow of sense,
 And won the heart with manly eloquence !
 He first was seen of all the peers to rise, 625
 The third in wisdom where they all were wise ;
 But when, to try the fortune of the day,
 Host mov'd tow'rd host in terrible array,
 Before the van, impatient for the fight,
 With martial port he strode, and stern delight ; 630
 Heaps strew'd on heaps, beneath his faulchion groan'd,
 And monuments of dead deform'd the ground.
 The time would fail, should I in order tell.
 What foes were vanquish'd, and what numbers fell :
 How, lost through love, Eurypylus was slain, 635
 And round him bled his bold Cetaean train.
 To Troy no hero came of nobler line ;
 Or if of nobler, Memnon, it was thine.

When Ilion in the horse receiv'd her doom,
 And unseen armies ambush'd in its womb ; 640
 Greece gave her latent warriors to my care,
 'Twas mine on Troy to pour th' imprison'd war :
 Then when the boldest bosom beat with fear,
 When the stern eyes of heroes dropp'd a tear ;
 Fierce in his look his ardent valour glow'd, 645
 Flush'd in his cheek, or sallied in his blood ;
 Indignant in the dark recess he stands,
 Pants for the battle, and the war demands ;
 His voice breath'd death, and with a martial air
 He grasp'd his sword, and shook his glittering spear ;
 And when the Gods our arms with conquest crown'd,
 When Troy's proud bulwarks smok'd upon the ground,
 Greece

Greece to reward her foldier's gallant toils,
Heap high his navy with unnumber'd spoils.

Thus great in glory from the din of war 655
Safe he return'd without one hostile scar ;
Though spears in iron tempests rain'd around,
Yet innocent they play'd, and guiltless of a wound.

While yet I spoke, the shade with transport glow'd,
Rose in his majesty, and nobler trod ; 660
With haughty stalk he fought the distant glades
Of warrior kings, and join'd th' illustrious shades.

Now without number ghost by ghost arose,
All wailing with unutterable woes.
Alone, apart, in discontented mood, 665
A gloomy shade, the fullen Ajax stood ;
For ever sad with proud disdain he pin'd,
And the lost arms for ever stung his mind ;
Though on the contest Thetis gave the laws,
And Pallas, by the Trojans, judg'd the cause. 670
O why was I victorious in the strife ;
O dear-bought honour with so brave a life !
With him the strength of war, the soldiers pride,
Our second hope to great Achilles died !
Touch'd at the sight, from tears I scarce refrain, 675
And tender sorrow thrills in every vein ;
Pensive and sad I stand, at length accost
With accents mild th' inexorable ghost.

Still burns thy rage ? and can brave souls resent
Ev'n after death ? Relent, great shade, relent ! 680
Perish those arms which by the Gods decree
Accurs'd our army with the loss of thee !

With

With thee we fell; Greece wept thy hapless fates;
 And shook astonish'd through her hundred states;
 Not more, when great Achilles press'd the ground,
 And breath'd his manly spirit through the wound,
 Oh, deem thy fall not ow'd to man's decree,
 Jove hated Greece, and punish'd Greece in thee!
 Turn then, oh! peaceful turn, thy wrath control,
 And calm the raging tempest of thy soul. 690

While yet I speak, the shade disdains to stay,
 In silence turns, and fullen stalks away.

Touch'd at his sour retreat, through deepest night,
 Through hell's black bounds I had pursued his flight,
 And forc'd the stubborn spectre to reply; 695
 But wondrous visions drew my curious eye.

High on a throne, tremendous to behold,
 Stern Minos waves a mace of burnish'd gold;
 Around ten thousand thousand spectres stand
 Through the wide dome of Dis, a trembling band.
 Still as they plead, the fatal lots he rolls,
 Absolves the just, and dooms the guilty souls.

There huge Orion, of portentous size,
 Swift through the gloom a giant-hunger flies!
 A ponderous mace of brass with direful sway 705
 Aloft he whirls, to crush the savage prey!
 Stern beasts in trains that by his truncheon fell,
 Now grisly forms, shoot o'er the lawns of hell.

There Tityus large and long, in fetters bound,
 O'erspreads nine acres of infernal ground; 710
 Two ravenous vultures, furious for their food,
 Scream o'er the fiend, and riot in his blood,

Incessant

Incessant gore the liver in his breast,
 Th' immortal liver grows, and gives th' immortal feast.
 For as o'er Panope's enamel'd plains, 715
 Latona journey'd to the Pythian fanes,
 With haughty love th' audacious monster strove
 To force the Goddess, and to rival Jove.

There Tantalus along the Stygian bounds
 Pours out deep groans (with groans all hell resounds)
 Ev'n in the circling floods refreshment craves,
 And pines with thirst amidst a sea of waves:
 When to the water he his lip applies,
 Back from his lip the treacherous water flies.
 Above, beneath, around his hapless head, 725
 Trees of all kinds delicious fruitage spread;
 There figs sky-died, a purple hue disclose,
 Green looks the olive, the pomegranate glows,
 There dangling pears exalted scents unfold,
 And yellow apples ripen into gold; 730
 The fruit he strives to seize: but blasts arise,
 Toss it on high, and whirl it to the skies.

I turn'd my eye, and as I turn'd survey'd
 A mournful vision! the Sisyphian shade;
 With many a weary step, and many a groan, 735
 Up the high hill he heaves a huge round stone;
 The huge round stone, resulting with a bound,
 Thunders impetuous down, and smokes along the
 ground.

Again the restless orb his toil renews,
 Dust mounts in clouds, and sweat descends in dews.

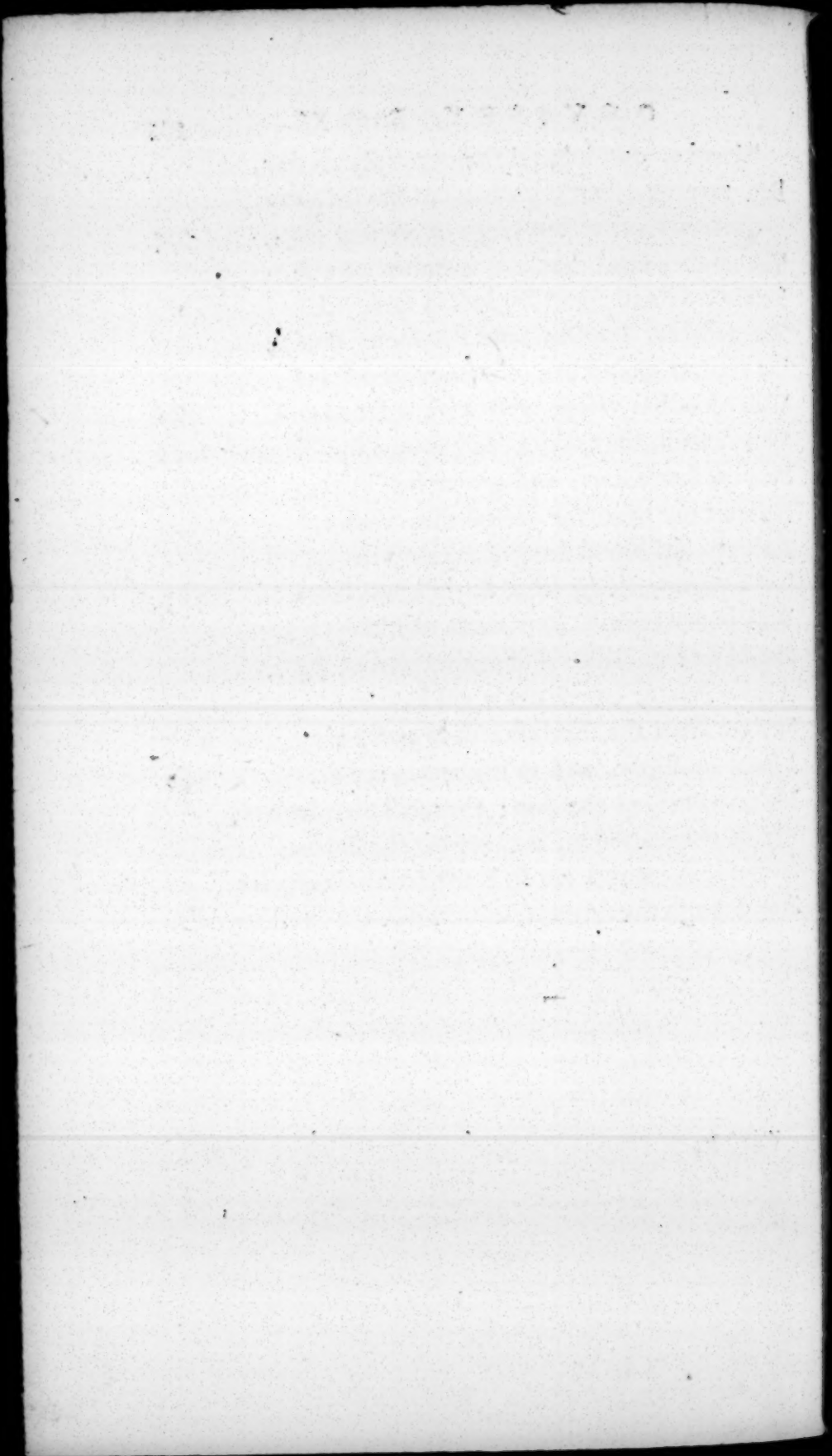
Now I the strength of Hercules behold,
 A towering spectre of gigantic mould.

A shadowy

A shadowy form! for high in heaven's abodes
 Himself resides, a God among the Gods;
 There, in the bright assemblies of the skies, 745
 He nectar quaffs, and Hebe crowns his joys.
 Here hovering ghosts, like fowl, his shade surround,
 And clang their pinions with terrific sound;
 Gloomy as night he stands, in act to throw
 Th' aerial arrow from the twanging bow. 750
 Around his breast a wondrous zone is roll'd,
 Where woodland monsters grin in fretted gold,
 There fullen lions sternly seem to roar,
 The bear to growl, to foam the tusky boar,
 There war and havock and destruction stood, 755
 And vengeful murder red with human blood.
 Thus terribly adorn'd the figures shine,
 Inimitable wrought with skill divine.
 The mighty ghost advanc'd with awful look,
 And, turning his grim visage, sternly spoke: 760
 O exercis'd in grief! by arts refin'd!
 O taught to bear the wrongs of base mankind!
 Such, such was I! still tost from care to care,
 While in your world I drew the vital air!
 Ev'n I, who from the Lord of Thunders rose, 765
 Bore toils and dangers, and a weight of woes;
 To a base monarch still a slave confin'd,
 (The hardest bondage to a generous mind!
 Down to these worlds I trod the dismal way,
 And dragg'd the three-mouth'd dog to upper day; 770
 Ev'n hell I conquer'd, through the friendly aid
 Of Maia's offspring and the Martial Maid.

Thus

Thus he, nor deign'd for our reply to stay,
 But, turning, stalk'd with giant strides away,
 Curious to view the kings of ancient days, 775
 The mighty dead that live in endless praise,
 Resolv'd I stand; and haply had survey'd
 The god-like Theseus, and Perithous' shade;
 But swarms of spectres rose from deepest hell,
 With bloodless visage, and with hideous yell, 780
 They scream, they shriek; sad groans and dismal sounds
 Stun my fear'd ears, and pierce hell's utmost bounds.
 No more my heart the dismal din sustains,
 And my cold blood hangs shivering in my veins;
 Lest Gorgon, rising from th' infernal lakes, 785
 With horrors arm'd, and curls of hissing snakes,
 Should fix me, stiffen'd at the monstrous sight,
 A stony image, in eternal night!
 Straight from the direful coast to purer air
 I speed my flight, and to my mates repair. 790
 My mates ascend the ship; they strike their oars;
 The mountains lessen, and retreat the shores;
 Swift o'er the waves we fly; the freshening gales
 Sing through the shrouds, and stretch the swelling sails.



THE
TWELFTH BOOK
OF THE
ODYSSEY.

A R G U M E N T.

The Sirens, Scylla, and Charybdis.

HE relates, how after his return from the shades, he was sent by Circe on his voyage, by the coast of the Sirens, and by the Strait of Scylla and Charybdis: the manner in which he escaped those dangers: how, being cast on the island Trinacria, his companions destroyed the oxen of the Sun: the vengeance that followed; how all perished by shipwreck except himself, who, swimming on the mast of the ship, arrived on the island of Calypso. With which his relation concludes.

T H E
O D Y S S E Y.
B O O K XII.

THUS o'er the rolling surge the vessel flies,
Till from the waves th' Ææan hills arise.
Here the gay morn resides in radiant bowers,
Here keeps her revels with the dancing Hours;
Here Phœbus rising in th' ætherial way, 5
Through heaven's bright portals pours the beamy day.
At once we fix our halbers on the sand,
At once descend, and press the desert land;
There, worn and wasted, lose our cares in sleep,
To the hoarse murmurs of the rolling deep. 10

Soon as the morn restor'd the day, we pay'd
Sepulchral honours to Elpenor's shade.
Now by the axe the rushing forest bends,
And the huge pile along the shore ascends.
Around we stand a melancholy train, 15
And a loud groan re-echoes from the main.
Fierce o'er the pyre, by fanning breezes spread,
The hungry flame devours the silent dead.
A rising tomb, the silent dead to grace,
Fast by the roarings of the main we place; 20
The rising tomb a lofty column bore,
And high above it rose the tapering oar.

Meantime the * Goddess our return survey'd
 From the pale ghosts, and hell's tremendous shade.
 Swift she descends: A train of nymphs divine 25
 Bear the rich viands and the generous wine:
 In act to speak the * Power of Magic stands,
 And graceful thus accosts the listening bands:

O sons of woe! decreed by adverse fates
 Alive to pass through hell's eternal gates! 30
 More wretched you! twice numbered with the dead!
 All, soon or late, are doom'd that path to tread;
 This day adjourn your cares; exalt your souls,
 Indulge the taste, and drain the sparkling bowls:
 And when the morn unveils her saffron ray, 35
 Spread your broad sails, and plough the liquid way;
 Lo! I this night, your faithful guide, explain
 Your woes by land, your dangers on the main.

The Goddess spoke in feasts we waste the day
 Till Phœbus downward plung'd his burning ray; 40
 Then fable night ascends, and balmy rest
 Seals every eye, and calms the troubled breast.
 Then curious she commands me to relate
 The dreadful scenes of Pluto's dreary state:
 She sat in silence while the tale I tell 45
 The wonderous visions, and the laws of hell.

Then thus: The lot of man the Gods dispose;
 These ills are past: now hear thy future woes.
 O prince, attend! some favouring power be kind,
 And print th' important story on thy mind! 50

Next, where the Sirens dwell, you plough the seas;
 Their song is death, and makes destruction please.

• Circe.

Unblest

Unblest the man, whom music wins to stay
 Nigh the curst shore, and listen to the lay :
 No more that wretch shall view the joys of life, 55
 His blooming offspring, or his beauteous wife !
 In verdant meads they sport ; and wide around
 Lie human bones, that whiten all the ground ;
 The ground polluted floats with human gore,
 And human carnage taints the dreadful shore, 60
 Fly swift the dangerous coast ; let every ear
 Be stopp'd against the song ! 'tis death to hear !
 Firm to the mast with chains thyself be bound,
 Nor trust thy virtue to th' enchanting sound.
 If, mad with transport, freedom thou demand, 65
 Be every fetter strain'd, and added band to band.

These seas o'erpass, be wise ! but I refrain
 To mark distinct thy voyage o'er the main :
 New horrors rise ! let prudence be thy guide,
 And guard thy various passage through the tide. 70

High o'er the main two rocks exalt their brow,
 The boiling billows thundering roll below ;
 Through the vast waves the dreadful wonders move,
 Hence nam'd Erratick by the Gods above.
 No bird of air, no dove of swiftest wing, 75
 That bears ambrosial to th' ætherial King,
 Shuns the dire rocks : in vain she cuts the skies,
 The dire rocks meet, and crush her as she flies ;
 Not th' fleet bark, when prosperous breezes play,
 Ploughs o'er that roaring surge its desperate way ; 80
 O'erwhelm'd it sinks : while round a smoke expires
 And the waves flashing seem to burn with fires.

Scarce the fam'd Argo pass'd these raging floods,
 The sacred Argo, fill'd with demigods!
 Ev'n she had sunk, but Jove's imperial bride
 Wing'd her fleet sail, and push'd her o'er the tide.

85

High in the air the rock its summit shrouds,
 In brooding tempests, and in rolling clouds;
 Loud storms around and mists eternal rise,
 Beat its bleak brow, and intercept the skies.
 When all the broad expansion bright with day
 Glows with th' autumnal or the summer ray,
 The summer and the autumn glow in vain,
 The sky for ever lours, for ever clouds remain.
 Impervious to the step of man it stands,
 Though borne by twenty feet, though arm'd with twenty
 hands;

90

95

Smooth as the polish of the mirrour rise
 The slippery sides, and shoot into the skies.
 Full in the centre of this rock display'd,
 A yawning cavern casts a dreadful shade:
 Nor the fleet arrow from the twanging bow,
 Sent with full force, could reach the depth below.
 Wide to the west the horrid gulph extends,
 And the dire passage down to hell descends
 O fly the dreadful sight! expand thy sails,
 Ply the strong oar, and catch the nimble gales;
 Here Scylla bellows from her dire abodes,
 Tremendous pest! abhorr'd by men and gods!
 Hideous her voice, and with less terrors roar
 The whelps of lions in the midnight hour.
 Twelve feet deform'd and foul the fiend dispreads;
 Six horrid necks she rears, and six terrific heads;

100

105

110

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Her jaws grin dreadful with three rows of teeth;
 Jaggy they stand, the gaping den of death;
 Her parts obscene the raging billows hide;
 Her bosom terribly o'erlooks the tide.

115

When stung with hunger she embroils the flood,
 The sea-dog and the dolphin are her food;
 She makes the huge leviathan her prey,
 And all the monsters of the watery way;

120

The swiftest racer of the azure plain
 Here fills her sails and spreads her oars in vain;
 Fell Scylla rises, in her fury roars,

At once six mouths expands, at once six men devours.

Close by, a rock of less enormous height
 Breaks the wild waves, and forms a dangerous streight:
 Full on its crown a fig's green branches rise,
 And shoot a leafy forest to the skies;

125

Beneath Charybdis holds her boistering reign
 'Midst roaring whirlpools, and absorbs the main; 130

Thrice in her gulfs the boiling seas subside,
 Thrice in dire thunders she refunds the tide.

Oh, if thy vessel plough the direful waves
 When seas retreating roar within her caves,
 Ye perish all! though he who rules the main
 Lend his strong aid, his aid he lends in vain.

135

Ah, shun the horrid gulf! by Scylla fly,
 'Tis better fix to lose, than all to die.

I then: O nymph propitious to my prayer,
 Goddess divine! my guardian power, declare,
 Is the foul fiend from human vengeance freed?
 Or, if I rise in arms, can Scylla bleed?

140

Then

Then she : O worn by toils, O broke in fight,
 Still are new toils and war thy dire delight ?
 Will martial flames for ever fire thy mind, 145
 And never, never be to heaven resign'd ?
 How vain thy efforts to avenge the wrong ?
 Deathless the pest ! impenetrably strong !
 Furious and fell, tremendous to behold !
 Ev'n with a look she withers all the bold ! 150
 She mocks the weak attempts of human might ;
 Oh fly her rage ! thy conquest is thy flight.
 If but to seize thy arms thou make delay,
 Again the fury vindicates her prey,
 Her six mouths yawn, and six are snatch'd away,
 From her foul womb Cratæis gave to air
 This dreadful pest ! To her direct thy prayer,
 To curb the monster in her dire abodes,
 And guard thee through the tumult of the floods.
 Thence to Trinacria's shore you bend your way, 160
 Where graze thy herds, illustrious Source of Day !
 Seven herds, seven flocks, enrich the sacred plains ;
 Each herd, each flock, full fifty heads contains :
 The wonderous kind a length of age survey,
 By breed increase not, nor by death decay, 165
 Two sister Goddesses possess the plain,
 The constant guardians of the woolly train ;
 Lampetie fair, and Phaethusa young,
 From Phœbus and the bright Næra sprung :
 Here, watchful o'er the flocks, in shady bowers 170
 And flowery meads they waste the joyous hours.
 Rob not the God ! and so propitious gales
 Attend thy voyage, and impel thy sails ;

But if thy impious hands the flocks destroy,
The Gods, the Gods avenge it, and ye die! 175

'Tis thine alone (thy friends and navy lost)
Through tedious toils to view thy native coast.

She ceas'd : and now arose the morning ray ;
Swift to her dome the Goddess held her way.

Then to my mates I measur'd back the plain, 180
Climb'd the tall bark, and rush'd into the main ;

Then bending to the stroke, their oars they drew
To their broad breasts, and swift the galley flew.

Up-sprung a brisker breeze ; with freshning gales,
The friendly Goddess stretch'd the swelling sails; 185

We drop our oars ; at ease the pilot guides ;
The vessel light along the level glides.

When, rising sad and slow, with pensive look,
Thus to the melancholy train I spoke :

O friends, Oh ever partners of my woes, 190
Attend, while I what Heaven foredooms disclose,

Hear all! Fate hangs o'er all! on you it lies
To live, or perish! to be safe, be wise!

In flowery meads the sportive Sirens play,
Touch the soft lyre, and tune the vocal lay; 195

Me, me alone, with fetters firmly bound,
The Gods allow to hear the dangerous sound.

Hear and obey ; if freedom I demand,
Be every fetter strain'd, and added band to band.

While yet I speak, the winged galley flies, 200
And lo! the Siren shores like mists arise.

Sunk were at once the winds ; the air above,
And waves below, at once forgot to move!

Some

Some dæmon calm'd the air, and smooth'd the deep,
 Hush'd the loud winds, and charm'd the waves to sleep,
 Now every sail we furl, each oar we ply;
 Lash'd by the stroke, the frothy waters fly.
 The ductile wax with busy hands I mould,
 And cleft in fragments, and the fragments roll'd:
 Th' aerial region now grew warm with day, 210
 The wax dissolv'd beneath the burning ray!
 Then every ear I barr'd against the strain,
 And from access of phrenzy lock'd the brain.
 Now round the mast my mates the fetters roll'd,
 And bound me limb by limb, with fold on fold. 215
 Then, bending to the stroke, the active train
 Plunge all at once their oars, and cleave the main.

While to the shore the rapid vessel flies,
 Our swift approach the Siren quire descries;
 Celestial music warbles from their tongue, 220
 And thus the sweet deluders tune the song:

Oh stay, O pride of Greece! Ulysses, stay!
 Oh cease thy course, and listen to our lay!
 Blest is the man ordain'd our voice to hear,
 The song instructs the soul, and charms the ear. 225
 Approach! thy soul shall into raptures rise!
 Approach! and learn new wisdom from the wise!
 We know whate'er the kings of mighty name
 Atchiev'd at Ilion in the field of fame;
 Whate'er beneath the sun's bright journey lies, 230
 Oh stay and learn new wisdom from the wise!

Thus the sweet charmers warbled o'er the main;
 My soul takes wing to meet the heavenly strain;

I give

I give the sign, and struggle to be free;
 Swift row my mates, and shoot along the sea; 235
 New chains they add, and rapid urge the way,
 Till, dying off, the distant sounds decay:
 Then, scudding swiftly from the dangerous ground,
 The deafen'd ear unlock'd, the chains unbound.

Now all at once tremendous scenes unfold; 240
 Thunder'd the deeps, the smoking billows roll'd!
 Tumultuous waves embroil'd the bellowing flood,
 All trembling, deafen'd, and aghast we stood!
 No more the vessel plough'd the dreadful wave,
 Fear seiz'd the mighty, and unnerv'd the brave; 245
 Each dropp'd his oar: but swift from man to man
 With looks serene I turn'd, and thus began:
 O friends! Oh often tried in adverse storms!
 With ills familiar in more dreadful forms!
 Deep in the dire Cyclopean den you lay, 250
 Yet safe return'd—Ulysses led the way.

Learn courage hence! and in my care confide:
 Lo! still the same Ulysses is your guide!
 Attend my words! your oars incessant ply;
 Strain every nerve, and bid the vessel fly. 255
 If from yon justling rocks and wavy war
 Jove safety grants; he grants it to your care.
 And thou whose guiding hand directs our way,
 Pilot, attentive listen and obey!
 Bear wide thy course, nor plough those angry waves
 Where rolls yon smoke, yon tumbling ocean raves;
 Steer by the higher rock; lest whirl'd around
 We sink, beneath the circling eddy drown'd.

While

While yet I speak, at once their oars they seize,
 Stretch to the stroke, and brush the working seas. 265
 Cautious the name of Scylla I suppress;
 That dreadful sound had chill'd the boldest breast.

Meantime, forgetful of the voice divine,
 All dreadful bright my limbs in armour shine;
 High on the deck I take my dangerous stand, 270
 Two glittering javelins lighten in my hand;
 Prepar'd to whirl the whizzing spear I stay,
 Till the fell fiend arise to seize her prey.
 Around the dungeon, studious to behold
 The hideous pest! my labouring eyes I roll'd; 275
 In vain; the dismal dungeon dark as night
 Veils the dire monster, and confounds the sight.

Now through the rocks, appall'd with deep dismay,
 We bend our course, and stem the desperate way;
 Dire Scylla there a scene of horror forms, 280
 And here Charybdis fills the deed with storms.
 When the tide rushes from her rumbling caves
 The rough rock roars; tumultuous boil the waves;
 They toss, they foam, a wild confusion raise,
 Like waters bubbling o'er the fiery blaze; 285
 Eternal mists obscure th' ærial plain,
 And high above the rock she spouts the main!
 When in her gulphs the rushing sea subsides,
 She drains the ocean with the reflux tides:
 The rock rebellows with a thundering sound; 290
 Deep, wondrous deep below, appears the ground.

Struck with despair, with trembling hearts we view'd
 The yawning dungeon, and the tumbling flood;

When

When, lo! fierce Scylla stoop'd to seize her prey,
 Stretch'd her dire jaws, and swept six men away ; 295
 Chiefs of renown ! loud-echoing shrieks arise :
 I turn and view them quivering in the skies ;
 They call, and aid with out-stretch'd arms implore :
 In vain they call ; those arms are stretch'd no more.
 As, from some rock that over-hangs the flood, 300
 The silent fisher calls th' insidious food,
 With fraudulent care he waits the finny prize,
 And sudden lifts it quivering to the skies :
 So the foul monster lifts her prey on high,
 So pant the wretches, struggling in the sky ; 305
 In the wide dungeon she devours her food,
 And the flesh trembles while she churns the blood.
 Worn as I am with griefs, with care decay'd ;
 Never, I never, scene so dire survey'd ;
 My shivering blood, congeal'd, forgot to flow ; 310
 Aghast I stood, a monument of woe !

Now from the rocks the rapid vessel flies,
 And the hoarse din like distant thunder dies ;
 To Sol's bright isle our voyage we pursue,
 And now the glittering mountains rise to view. 315
 There sacred to the radiant God of day,
 Graze the fair herds, the flocks promiscuous stray ;
 Then suddenly was heard along the main
 To low the ox, to bleat the woolly train,
 Straight to my anxious thoughts the sound convey'd
 The words of Circe and the Theban shade ;
 Warn'd by their awful voice these shores to shun,
 With cautious fears oppress'd, I thus begun :

O friends !

O friends! Oh ever exercis'd in care!

Hear Heaven's commands, and reverence what ye hear!
To fly these shores the prescient Theban shade
And Circe warns! O be their voice obey'd:
Some mighty woe relentless Heaven forebodes:
Fly the dire regions, and revere the Gods!

While yet I spoke, a sudden sorrow ran 330 }
Through every breast, and spread from man to man,
Till wrathful thus Eurylochus began:

O cruel thou! some fury fure has steel'd
That stubborn soul, by toil untaught to yield!
From sleep debarr'd, we sink from woes to woes: 335
And cruel enviest thou a short repose?

Still must we restless rove, new seas explore,
The sun descending, and so near the shore?
And, lo! the night begins her gloomy reign,
And doubles all the terrors of the main. 340

Oft in the dead of night loud winds arise,
Lash the wild surge, and bluster in the skies;
Oh! should the fierce south-west his rage display,
And toss with rising storms the watery way,
Though Gods descend from heaven's ærial plain 345
To lend us aid, the Gods descend in vain:

Then while the night displays her awful shade,
Sweet time of slumber! be the night obey'd!
Haste ye to land! and when the morning ray
Sheds her bright beam, pursue the destin'd way. 350
A sudden joy in every bosom rose:

So will'd some dæmon, minister of woes!

To whom with grief—Oh! swift to be undone,
Constrain'd I act what wisdom bids me shun.

But

But yonder herds and yonder flocks forbear; 355
Attest the heavens, and call the Gods to hear:
Content an innocent repast display,
By Circe given, and fly the dangerous prey.

Thus I: and while to shore the vessel flies,
With hands uplifted they attest the skies; 360
Then, where a fountain's gurgling waters play,
They rush to land, and end in feasts the day:
They feed; they quaff; and now (their hunger fed)
Sigh for their friends devour'd, and mourn the dead.
Nor cease the tears, till each in slumber shares 365
A sweet forgetfulness of human cares.

Now far the night advanc'd her gloomy reign,
And setting stars roll'd down the azure plain:
When, at the voice of Jove, wild whirlwinds rise,
And clouds and double darkness veil the skies; 370
The moon, the stars, the bright ætherial host
Seem as extinct, and all their splendors lost;
The furious tempest roars with dreadful sound:
Air thunders, rolls the ocean, groans the ground.
All night it rag'd: when morning rose, to land 375
We haul'd our bark, and moor'd it on the strand,
Where in a beauteous grotto's cool recess
Dance the green Nereids of the neighbouring seas.

There while the wild winds whistled o'er the main,
Thus careful I address the listening train: 380

O friends, be wise, nor dare the flocks destroy
Of these fair pastures: if ye touch, ye die.
Warn'd by the high command of Heaven, be aw'd;
Holy the flocks, and dreadful is the God!

That God who spreads the radiant beams of light, 385
And views wide earth and heaven's unmeasur'd height.

And now the moon had run her monthly round,
The south-east blustering with a dreadful sound;
Unhurt the bees, untouch'd the woolly train
Low through the grove, or range the flowery plain: 390
Then fail'd our food; then fish we make our prey,
Or fowl that screaming hunt the watery way.
Till now, from sea or flood no succour found,
Famine and meagre want besieg'd us round.
Pensive and pale from grove to grove I stray'd, 395
From the loud storms to find a sylvan shade;
There o'er my hands the living wave I pour;
And Heaven and Heaven's immortal thrones adore,
To calm the roarings of the stormy main,
And grant me peaceful to my realms again. 400
Then o'er my eyes the Gods soft slumber shed,
While thus Eurylochus arising said:

O friends, a thousand ways frail mortals lead
To the cold tomb, and dreadful all to tread;
But dreadful most, when by a slow decay 405
Pale hunger wastes the manly strength away.
Why cease ye then t' implore the Powers above,
And offer hecatombs to thundering Jove?
Why seize ye not yon bees, and fleecy prey?
Arise unanimous; arise and slay! 410
And, if the Gods ordain a safe return,
To Phœbus shrines shall rise, and altars burn.
But, should the Powers that o'er mankind preside
Decree to plunge us in the whelming tide,

Better

ODYSSEY, Book XII.

323

Better to rush at once to shades below,
Than linger life away, and nourish woe! 415

Thus he: the bees around securely stray,
When swift to ruin they invade the prey;
They seize, they kill!—but for the rite divine,
The barley fail'd, and for libations wine. 420
Swift from the oak they strip the shady pride;
And verdant leaves the flowery cake supply'd.

With prayer they now address th' ætherial train,
Slay the selected bees, and slay the slain;
The thighs, with fat involv'd, divide with art, 425
Strew'd o'er with morsels cut from every part.
Water, instead of wine, is brought in urns,
And pour'd profanely as the victim burns.
The thighs thus offer'd, and the entrails drest,
They roast the fragments, and prepare the feast. 430

'Twas then soft slumber fled my troubled brain;
Back to the bark I speed along the main.
When, lo! an odour from the feast exhales,
Spreads o'er the coast, and scents the tainted gales;
A chilly fear congeal'd my vital blood, 435
And thus obtesting Heaven I mourn'd aloud:

O Sire of men and gods, immortal Jove!
Oh, all ye blissful Powers that reign above!
Why were my cares beguil'd in short repose?
O fatal slumber paid with lasting woes! 440
A deed so dreadful all the Gods alarms,
Vengeance is on the wing, and Heaven in arms!

Meantime Lampetie mounts th' aerial way,
And kindles into rage the God of Day:

Y 2

Vengeance,

Vengeance, ye powers, (he cries) and thou whose hand
 Aims the red bolt, and hurls the writen brand!
 Slain are those herds which I with pride survey,
 When through the ports of Heaven I pour the day. }
 Or deep in Ocean plunge the burning ray.
 Vengeance, ye Gods! or I the skies forego, 450
 And bear the lamp of Heaven to shades below.

To whom the Thundering Power: O Source of Day!
 Whose radiant lamp adorns the azure way,
 Still may thy beams through heaven's bright portals rise,
 The joy of earth, and glory of the skies; 455
 Lo! my red arm I bare, my thunders guide,
 To dash th' offenders in the whelming tide.

To fair Calypso, from the bright abodes,
 Hermes convey'd these councils of the Gods.

Meantime from man to man my tongue exclaims,
 My wrath is kindled, and my soul in flames.
 In vain! I view perform'd the direful deed,
 Beeves, slain by heaps, along the ocean bleed.

Now Heaven gave signs of wrath; along the ground }
 Crept the raw hides, and with a bellowing sound
 Roar'd the dead limbs; the burning entrails groan'd. }
 Six guilty days my wretched mates employ
 In impious feasting, and unhallow'd joy;
 The seventh arose, and now the Sire of Gods
 Rein'd the rough storms, and calm'd the tossing floods:
 With speed the bark we climb; the spacious sails
 Loos'd from the yards invite th' impelling gales.
 Past sight of shore, along the surge we bound,
 And all above is sky, and ocean all around!

When

When, lo! a murky cloud the Thunderer forms 475

Full o'er our heads, and blackens heaven with storms.

Night dwells o'er all the deep: and now outflies

The gloomy West, and whistles in the skies.

The mountain-billows roar! the furious blast

Howls o'er the shroud, and rends it from the mast:

The mast gives way, and, crackling as it bends,

Tears up the deck; then all at once descends;

The pilot by the tumbling ruin slain,

Dash'd from the helm, falls headlong in the main.

Then Jove in anger bids his thunders roll, 485

And forked lightnings flash from pole to pole.

Fierce at our heads his deadly bolt he aims,

Red with uncommon wrath, and wrapt in flames:

Full on the bark it fell; now high, now low:

Toss'd and re-toss'd, it reel'd beneath the blow; 490

At once into the main the crew it shook:

Sulphureous odours rose, and smouldering smoke.

Like fowl that haunt the floods, they sink, they rise,

Now lost, now seen, with shrieks and dreadful cries;

And strive to gain the bark; but Jove denies. 495

Firm at the helm I stand, when fierce the main

Rush'd with dire noise, and dash'd the sides in twain;

Again impetuous drove the furious blast,

Snap the strong helm, and bore to sea the mast.

Firm to the mast with cords the helm I bind, 500

And ride aloft, to Providence resign'd,

Through tumbling billows, and a war of wind.

Now sunk the West, and now a Southern breeze

More dreadful than the tempest, lash'd the seas;

For on the rocks it bore where Scylla raves, 505
 And dire Charybdis rolls her thundering waves.
 All night I drove; and at the dawn of day;
 Fast by the rocks beheld the desperate way:
 Just when the sea within her gulfs subsides,
 And in the roaring whirlpools rush the tides. 510
 Swift from the float I vaulted with a bound,
 The lofty fig-tree seiz'd, and clung around.
 So to the beam the bat tenacious clings,
 And pendent round it clasps his leathern wings.
 High in the air the tree its boughs display'd, 515
 And o'er the dungeon cast a dreadful shade,
 All unsustain'd between the wave and sky,
 Beneath my feet the whirling billows fly,
 What-time the judge forsakes the noisy bar
 To take repast, and stills the wordy war; 520
 Charybdis rumbling from her inmost caves,
 The mast refunded on her reflux waves.
 Swift from the tree, the floating mast to gain,
 Sudden I dropt amidst the flashing main;
 Once more undaunted on the ruin rode, 525
 And oar'd with labouring arms along the flood.
 Unseen I pass'd by Scylla's dire abodes:
 So Jove decreed (dread Sire of men and gods).
 Then nine long days I plough'd the calmer seas,
 Heav'd by the surge, and wafted by the breeze. 530
 Weary and wet th' Ogygian shores I gain,
 When the tenth sun descended to the main.
 There, in Calypso's ever-fragrant bowers,
 Refresh'd I lay, and joy beguil'd the hours.
 My

My following fates to thee, O King, are known,
 And the bright partner of thy royal throne.
 Enough: in misery can words avail?
 And what so tedious as a twice-told tale?

CONTENTS

C O N T E N T S
O F
THE FIFTIETH VOLUME.

	Page
A GENERAL VIEW OF THE EPICK POEM, AND OF THE ILIAD AND ODYSSEY - - - -	1
ODYSSEY, Book I. - - - -	39
II. - - - -	61
III. - - - -	81
IV. - - - -	105
V. - - - -	145
VI. - - - -	169
VII. - - - -	185
VIII. - - - -	203
IX. - - - -	227
X. - - - -	251
XI. - - - -	277
XII. - - - -	307

END OF VOL. I.

